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THE POLITICS OF MICHIGAN

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THE POLITICS OF MICHIGAN

1865-1878

BY

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THE POLITICS OF MICHIGAN

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HARRIETTE M. DILLA

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PREFACE

AN attempt has been made in the following pages to set forth the attitude of Michigan on the leading political issues during the important years from 1865 to 1878. The party interests of the state naturally centered about national questions during this period, but there were certain local issues, such as railroad construction and internal improvement, which also received much attention. Probably the most striking features of Michigan politics at this time were the unbroken dominance of the Republican party, and the prominence of the personal element arising from the unusual characteristics of several of the leaders.

My research has been greatly facilitated by many persons who have manifested a kind interest in its progress. Mr. Thomas A. Wilson and Edward W. Barber, of Jackson, Michigan, very kindly contributed many personal reminiscences which were helpful because of their impartiality. Mr. C. M. Burton, of Detroit, Michigan, extended to me the privilege of his excellent private library, containing all the letters and papers of Jacob M. Howard.

Among the many persons who assisted me in my research, acknowledgments are due Mr. Gaillard Hunt, Mr. William L. Bishop, and Miss Emily West, of the Library of Congress, and Mr. Byron A. Finney and Miss Fredricka Gillette, of the Library of the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

I am most deeply indebted, however, to Professor William A. Dunning, of Columbia University, who has rendered the most valuable assistance throughout the preparation of this monograph, by his advice both as to content and as to manner of treatment.

PREFACE

The present volume is a reprint of the original paper, as published in the *Journal of the Royal Society of Medicine*, in 1911. The paper was written by the author, who was then a student in the University of London, and was published in the *Journal* of the Royal Society of Medicine, in 1911. The paper was written by the author, who was then a student in the University of London, and was published in the *Journal* of the Royal Society of Medicine, in 1911. The paper was written by the author, who was then a student in the University of London, and was published in the *Journal* of the Royal Society of Medicine, in 1911.

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EXPLANATION TO MAP I

The roman numerals indicate the Congressional Districts into which the state was divided until the reapportionment of 1872.

The counties indicated by the arabic figures, and the principal cities by capitals, are enumerated in the explanation of the following map.



EXPLANATION TO MAP I

The roman numerals indicate the Congressional Districts according to the reapportionment of 1872. The map is taken from the Statistical Manual of 1872, following page 144.

The counties are as follows:

1 Ontonagon	27 Missaukee	52 Cass
2 Keweenaw	28 Cheboygan	53 St. Ignace
3 Houghton	29 Chippewa	54 Gay
4 Marquette	30 Isabella	55 Iosco
5 Menominee	31 Mason	56 St. Clair
6 Delta	32 Lake	57 Allegan
7 Schoolcraft	33 Oscoda	58 Barry
8 Chippewa	34 Clare	59 Montcalm
9 Mackinac	35 Gladwin	60 Ingham
10 Emmet	36 Bay	61 Livingston
11 Cheboygan	37 Oceana	62 Oakland
12 Presque Isle	38 Newago	63 Macomb
13 Charlevoix	39 Mecosta	64 Van Buren
14 Antrim	40 Isabella	65 Kalamazoo
15 Otsego	41 Holland	66 Calhoun
16 Montmorency	42 Muskegon	67 Jackson
17 Alpena	43 Montcalm	68 Washtenaw
18 Leelanaw	44 Gratiot	69 Wayne
19 Benzie	45 Saginaw	70 Lapeer
20 Grand Traverse	46 Tuscola	71 Cass
21 Kaskaskia	47 Huron	72 St. Joseph
22 Crawford	48 Sanilac	73 Genesee
23 Oscoda	49 Ottawa	74 Kalamazoo
24 Alcona	50 Kent	75 Monroe
25 Manistee	51 Ionia	
26 Wexford		

The following are the cities indicated:

A Lansing	L Marshall	W Manistee
B Detroit	M Coldwater	N Traverse City
C Grand Rapids	N Niles	O Alpena
D Kalamazoo	O Benton Harbor	Z Mackinaw
E Battle Creek	P Allegan	
F Jackson	Q Grand Haven	A' Sault Ste. Marie
G Ann Arbor	R Muskegon	B' Marquette
H Ypsilanti	S Port Huron	C' Houghton
I Monroe	T Saginaw	
J Adrian	U Bay City	M' Pontiac
K Hillsdale	V Ludington	N' Flint





CHAPTER I

RÉSUMÉ OF STATE POLITICS DURING THE WAR

EARLY POLITICS AND THE PERSONAL ISSUES OF 1862

THE reorganization of parties in 1854 and the election of 1856 marked a transition in the politics of the state of Michigan. The Democrats had held continued sway since its organization as a territory, with the exception of the year 1840, when the first presidential vote was cast for General Harrison. Their control was now broken by the advent of the Republican party, whose ascendancy began with Zachariah Chandler's election to the Senate in 1857, and the practical retirement of Lewis Cass from politics after his appointment by Buchanan as Secretary of State. In 1856 the popular vote supported the Republican candidate for President by a majority of over 19,000, and the six electors accordingly voted for Fremont and Dayton.¹

There was early expressed a preference for Seward over Lincoln as the presidential candidate in 1860,² and

¹ *Michigan Manual*, 1857, pp. 504-5. Campbell, *Outlines of the Political History of Michigan*, pp. 563 et seq. *Tribune Almanac*, 1857, pp. 59, 60. Fremont received 71,762 votes, Buchanan 52,136, and Fillmore, 1,660. The vote for governor disclosed the somewhat smaller Republican majority of 17,317. The majority of Pierce over Scott four years before was very small, the former receiving 41,842, the latter 33,859, while the absolute majority of the Democratic candidate was further reduced to 746 by the casting of 7,237 votes for Hale. Notwithstanding the unmistakable evidence of decline in the dominant party in 1852, the strength acquired by the Republican movement four years later was most remarkable.

² "Without any disparagement to numbers of distinguished men worthy of the highest confidence of the nation, I shall not, I trust,

the Michigan delegation to the Chicago Convention, of which Austin Blair was a member, refused to change their preference even on the last ballot, when it was apparent that Lincoln would win the nomination. He was well supported at the polls, however, receiving 23,423 plurality of the popular vote over Douglas.¹

Austin Blair was elected Governor by a plurality somewhat smaller than that of Lincoln. It was a fortunate selection for the Republicans, as Blair's conduct during the war was to give their party immense prestige. His father had been a strong Abolitionist, while he himself was a Whig and voted in 1844 for Henry Clay. As a member of the State legislature, he displeased a faction of the Whig party when he favored abolishing the color distinction in regard to the elective franchise. The opposition engendered by this agitation defeated him at the next election, whereupon he severed his old party affiliations, joined the Free Soil movement, and became a delegate to the Buffalo Convention at which the Free Soil party was founded in 1848. When this organization and the Anti-Slavery Whigs coalesced in 1854, Blair found that his old associates had advanced to his position. The Chicago platform of 1860 he adhered to throughout his political career, and twelve years later, when he assailed the administration and supported Greeley, he insisted that it was the Repub-

be thought unjust on pointing to the distinguished son of New York, William H. Seward, as the man worthy to receive this high honor. Never has American statesman been truer to this great cause. Let us omit no manly effort to give success to our party, and to bring back the constitution to its original principles and purposes." Letter of Jacob M. Howard to R. Hosmer, April 18, 1860, declining the nomination as State Attorney-General for the fourth term.—Howard MSS.

¹ *Souvenir of Michigan Legislature and Political History of Michigan*, published by the *Lansing State Republican*, 1897. *Mich. Man.*, 1861, p. 68. *Trib. Alm.*, 1861. Breckinridge received 805, Bell 405. Austin Blair received 87,806 votes for governor, and Barry, 67,221.

lican party, and not he, who had abandoned the principles of that platform.¹

Under the leadership of Governor Blair, Michigan gave generous support to the Union cause, and established a precedent that added much to the standing and tradition of the party in succeeding contests. One unmistakable expression of loyalty by the legislature was the carefully worked out "Joint Resolution on the State of the Union" finally approved February 2, 1861.² It declared the supremacy of the Government of the United States, and recognized the "full, inherent powers of self-protection and defense." The resources and military strength of the state were pledged to the government, and "concession and compromise" were declared impossible under all circumstances.³

The regular session of the legislature closed the middle of March, but after the fall of Sumter and Lincoln's call for troops Governor Blair issued the Proclamation of April 23rd, calling an extra session to meet the seventh day of May.⁴ His message to the legislature was a stirring ten-page

¹ *Representative Men of Michigan*, compiled by F. A. Barnard, Cincinnati, 1878; *Michigan Biographies*, Lansing, 1888; *Michigan Historical Collections*, vol. xxxv, "Michigan Men in Congress," Edward W. Barber.

² It originated with the House Committee on Federal Relations and when the articles were sent to the Senate, the corresponding committee of that House reported a substitute group of resolutions differing only in phraseology. As a result of mutual compromise, a final draft was agreed upon satisfactory to both Houses. *House Documents*, 1861, no. 1, pp. 1-6; *House Journal*, pp. 105-111, 162-3, 173-176, 181-187; *Senate Journal*, pp. 138, 268. The Joint Resolution is given in *Acts of Michigan*, 1861, no. 3, p. 579.

³ The policy of the federal government was materially aided by the militia act providing for the preparation, by assessors, of lists of persons liable to military duty; for the equipment and recruitment of troops; and for the authorization of a bond issue. *Acts*, 1861, pp. 300-305; 545-547, and 606, respectively.

⁴ *Senate Jour. and House Jour.*, Extra Session of 1861.

document, relating the circumstances of the recent proclamation calling for two regiments. It pointed out the lack of fiscal provisions in the militia law of the previous session, and made several valuable suggestions.¹ Grave apprehensions were expressed throughout the document as to the outcome of the war, and the spirit manifest in the message, as well as in the legislative support which followed, undoubtedly had great influence in strengthening the Union sentiment within the state.

The first act passed at the new session of the legislature amended the militia act passed at the session just preceding and placed the state upon a war footing.² It provided for the muster, drill and instruction of the militia, and required each member to take the oath of allegiance to the United States and to the state of Michigan, and of obedience to the President and Governor. It provided for courts-martial, and empowered the Governor to establish recruiting offices whenever he thought it proper in order to meet any deficiency in the state levy. The Governor was required to appoint a Military Contract Board of three officers, the majority of whom must approve all contracts for equipment, supplies and labor entered into for the state troops.

The second act provided for the relief by counties of the families of volunteers mustered into service from Michigan.³ The fifth measure made provision for the negotia-

¹ *Senate Jour. and House Jour.*, pp. 1-10; Joint Documents, Extra Session, 1861, no. 1. He urged the amendment of the militia law so that it authorize putting four new regiments upon a war footing, with power in case of emergency to raise the number to ten. He also recommended the authorization of towns and cities to levy taxes for the support of the families of volunteers.

² *Acts*, 1861, Extra Session, no. 1, pp. 595-602.

³ *Ibid.*, no. 2, p. 602.

tion of a loan not exceeding one million dollars at a rate of interest not exceeding seven per cent, to be redeemable at any time within twenty-five years from January 1, 1861, the interest payable semi-annually on the first day of January and July of each year. The bonds were exempted from taxation and the proceeds were to be devoted exclusively to war purposes.¹

Upon the assembling of the legislature in January of 1862 the duty of selecting a United States Senator devolved upon it by the death, in October of the previous year, of Kinsley S. Bingham, the senior senator from Michigan. Jacob M. Howard, a prominent attorney of Detroit, was mentioned as a possibility and his friends urged him to become a candidate. He had been a steadfast Whig until the founding of the Republican party, and like Chandler, believed the war to be inevitable, though he was not so strongly opposed to compromise. He had participated in the union of the anti-slavery element of the Old Whigs—which in Michigan was the dominant faction of the party—with the Abolitionists and Free Soil Democracy. He was a member of the committee on the address of the Republican National Convention at Pittsburgh, and his political training further included membership in the lower house of the 27th Congress, and the office of State Attorney-General from 1855 to 1861.² In the canvass for the senatorship, Howard's friends had some apprehensions concerning the "locality" argument; for in the event of his victory both senators would be residents of Detroit, and sectional opposition was feared from the central and western portions of the state.³ On the first ballot of the Republicans,

¹ *Acts*, 1861, Extra Session, no. 5, p. 605.

² *Rep. Men of Mich.*; *Mich. Biog.*; Farmer, *History of Detroit and Michigan*, vol. ii, p. 1059.

³ "My locality, it is true, is unfavorable. I trust, however, the

Howard received 21 votes out of 90, while Blair received 20, and on the seventh ballot, the former was nominated. Notwithstanding the locality disadvantage, he was elected over his Democratic adversary, but the difficulty he had feared in this election was to be effectual ten years later in working his defeat.¹

The elections of 1862 were accompanied in Michigan as in many other states by serious dissensions within the Republican party. All conservative elements fused into what was known as the Union movement, and to this movement the less aggressive Republicans contributed considerable strength. The Michigan Unionists' hostility to radicalism in general centered about Senator Chandler as the leader of the Radicals. The schism in the Republican party of the state followed the lines of personal feeling toward an intensely aggressive and uncompromising leader. The personal and local elements in the situation quite overshadowed the more important issues of the war and preservation of the Union, and thus prevented the "Union" movement from attaining such importance as it acquired in many other states. In New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Oregon, Illinois, and Delaware, the "Union" party movement absorbed the Republican party, and the Democracy stood in the light of an obstinate minority with disloyal inclinations. In Michigan the relative status was entirely different. The Republican party was of course thoroughly loyal, but in addition, it was committed to the

people of the state have known me too long and well to apprehend I should make Detroit the horizon of my views or the particular theater of my attentions. No, Sir, the Republican party owes too little to the voters of Detroit, and their opponents there are still too powerful to make it a very lovely spot for those who are attached to it (the party)." Letter of Howard to Charles Jewitt of Niles, December 23, 1861. *Howard MSS.*

¹ *Souv. of the Leg. and Hist. of Mich.*, p. 50.

support of the strong if not violent senior senator, and all those who were disaffected toward Chandler were forced over into alliance with the Democracy.

This combined opposition received different names from different sources. To the Republicans, it was only the "Democratic" organization swelled by a factious few who bolted from the lines of the one loyal party on wholly imaginary and insufficient personal grounds. To its own members, it was a "Fusion" party built upon a "Democratic" foundation, and possessing "Union" sentiments. There was naturally present within the ranks of this party a well-defined dissatisfaction with the progress of the war. The results of the failure of the Peninsular Campaign were visible in Michigan as elsewhere, and a tide of reaction against the administration was manifest in the election of 1862. But the personal politics in the state had so concealed the actual attitude upon the federal issues, that the outcome of the campaign surprised many Republicans. Blair indeed won the governorship by 6,500 over the Union-Democratic candidate,¹ and five of the six members elected to the lower house of Congress were Republicans. But the combined opposition was more successful in the state legislature, which showed a large proportion of Fusionists—51 against 81 Republicans on the joint ballot.² Moreover, abstention was practiced to a much greater extent than was customary in the years of state and Congressional

¹ Blair received 68,716, and Byron G. Stout, 62,102.

² In the previous legislature, the joint membership was distributed as follows: 100 Republicans and 12 Democrats. *Trib. Alm.*, 1861, p. 63. In 1862, there were 18 Republicans in the Senate, 63 in the House, while the Fusionists elected 14 to the Senate, and 37 to the House. *Trib. Alm.* 1863, pp. 61, 62; *World Alm.*, 1863; *Mich. Man.*, 1863. The reason for the discrepancy in the total membership of the two successive legislatures is the reapportionment of the State Representatives in 1861. *Acts*, 1861, no. 116, p. 154.

elections. The gubernatorial vote of 1860 exceeded that of 1862 by almost 25,000, and as the opposition candidate received approximately only 5,000 less, there was proof of abstention on the part of 20,000 Republicans at the latter election. Furthermore, as Blair's majority fell from 20,585 to 6,614, the Republican loss was almost 14,000. The strongest evidence of a reaction was, however, the presence of 51 "Fusionists" or "Unionists" in the state legislature, out of a membership of 132.

It was clearly evident that there would be strong opposition to a radical candidate in the Senatorial election. Upon the assembling of the legislature the opponents of Chandler began to organize. They effected a combination, and after an extended struggle between the faction favoring Ex-Senator Alpheus Felch, a Democrat, and those who insisted upon voting for a former Republican, the latter won, and James F. Joy was agreed upon as the opponent of Chandler. Joy was a thoroughly trained lawyer and a man of decided independence of conviction. Both candidates were residents of Detroit, and old acquaintances with very similar views upon many questions. Joy had voted the Republican state ticket, but objected to the re-election of Chandler on the ground that his faction in the Senate "dominated the President and thwarted such true leaders as Seward and Chase."¹

The act which probably told against Chandler most generally with the people was his letter of February 11, 1861, to Governor Blair relative to the appointment of delegates to the Peace Conference at Washington. After this assembly began deliberations and it appeared that the North was losing ground, Chandler wrote the Governor as follows: "Ohio, Indiana, and Rhode Island are caving in and

¹ *Mich. Coll.*, vol. xxx, pp. 101-2; Alfred Russell, *Life of Joy*; Farmer, *op. cit.*, vol. ii, p. 1059.

there is danger of Illinois, and now they beg us for God's sake to come to their rescue and save the Republican party from rupture. I hope you will send stiff-backed men or none." Then as a postscript the offensive passage was added: "Some of the manufacturing states think a fight would be awful. Without a little blood-letting this Union would not, in my estimation, be worth a rush."¹ Chandler, like Wade and Cameron, was convinced early in the year 1860 that war was unavoidable. His conversation with John Slidell of Louisiana,—in which the Southern Senator declared secession imminent,—and the discovery of Clay's draft of the secession ordinance for Alabama persuaded him that the time for negotiation had passed. It became his settled conviction that "there was treason in the White House, both Houses of Congress, and the Galleries of the Capitol."²

A second fruitful source of antagonism to Chandler was his speech of July 16, 1862, denouncing McClellan and the conduct of the war. Both this and his letter were leading campaign documents against the Republican cause in the elections and later in the senatorial contest. But Chandler had the advantage of being the "regular" candidate, and the favorite with the soldiers. He was elected by almost a two-thirds vote of the legislature, receiving 83 votes, while Joy, the Union candidate, received 45.³

¹ Rhodes, *History of the United States*, vol. iii, p. 291 and note 3. *Post and Tribune Life of Chandler*, pp. 186-200; *Mich. Coll.*, vol. xxviii, p. 439.

² Speech replying to Hendricks of Indiana in defense of his letter, *Globe*, Jan. 31, 1866, p. 885. The particulars are given in an article of reminiscences in the *N. Y. Times*, May 11, 1879. (Townsend Library, vol. lxxxiv, p. 166, columns 1, 2.) The letter, though a private one, soon appeared in the *Detroit Free Press*, whose editor, Wilbur Story, was a bitter enemy of the war.

³ Alpheus Felch as Democratic Candidate received two complimentary votes, and two other gentlemen each received one. *Souv. of the Leg. and Hist. of Mich.*, pp. 50-56.

POLITICS IN 1863 AND 1864, AND THE UNIONIST SUCCESS IN
MICHIGAN

Political activity in 1863 and 1864 was mainly concerned with criticism and defense of Lincoln's policy, and chief among the features about which this controversy centered was emancipation. A consideration of this issue and the subsequent question of suffrage raises the inquiry as to the attitude of Michigan toward the negro. The small percentage of negro population in the State precluded the social need for restrictive legislation.¹ In the early part of the legislative session of 1861, there was some agitation for the repeal of the Personal Liberty Law which gave fugitive slaves the right of *habeas corpus* and a trial by jury, the state paying the costs of defense.² The bill for the repeal was referred to the House Committee on Judiciary, which was unable to arrive at a unanimous agreement. The majority reported adversely, while the minority recommended its passage.³ At the next session, the measure was finally tabled by a vote of 54 to 35, and the agitation was ended.⁴

¹ In 1860, the negroes constituted 2.17% of the total population of the state, and by 1864 their numbers had decreased by a half. Of a total population of 751,111 in 1860, there were 16,310 blacks, and within four years the colored population fell to 8244, even with a total increase to 803,745. *Census Report of Mich.*, 1864, pp. 606, 633.

² Act of Feb. 13, 1855, "to protect the rights and liberties of the inhabitants of this state."

³ *House Doc.*, 1861, no. 16, 15 pages, and no. 17, 16 pages. The former was signed by Eugene Pringle, W. J. Howell and Gilbert E. Pratt; the latter by Thomas W. Lockwood and M. M. Atwood, *House Jour.*, 1861, pp. 526-40, 576-91.

⁴ It was first postponed indefinitely by a vote of 56 to 30, and then tabled February 19, 1863. *House Jour.*, 1863, pp. 606, 607, 782, 783. On January 28 of that year a public meeting was held in Detroit which called for "the repeal of the Personal Liberty Law, a return to the Missouri Compromise in order to settle forever the question of

Though the dominant element in the legislature was in favor of the protection of the blacks in their pursuit of liberty, the Republicans had yet to advance in order to support emancipation. In his letter of December 23, 1861, previously referred to,¹ Mr. Howard gave what was, in all probability, a fair résumé of the Republican view of the war. Suppression of the rebellion was considered the purpose of the North, and liberation of the slaves would be tolerated, if at all, only as a war measure, for the alienation of loyal slaveowners was, if possible, to be avoided.

The great object of the war is, in my judgment, to beat down the rebels and compel them to surrender. Our armies are called out to effect this; their mission is not to emancipate or to return slaves, but to crush the enemy. The Republican party has never presented themselves to the world as aiming to emancipate slaves in the states. The Chicago platform negatives the idea. But should it be necessary as a means of prosecuting the war to emancipate the slaves of rebels, the means should be used.

Perhaps the inadvisability of any other position at this time, from a technical point of view, was uppermost in his mind when he continued: "Why strip the Union men of the slave states of all hope by adopting a policy in which they cannot, cannot sympathize."

The message of Governor Blair at the opening of the extra session of 1862 showed an attitude somewhat more advanced on the emancipation issue, as he was probably the most radically loyal person of influence in the state at this time. He declared that by the laws of war, emancipation was entirely justifiable.

slavery in the South or in the District of Columbia." It was remarked at the time that "with this ineffective meeting, the Cass idea expired in Michigan." *Mich. Coll.*, vol. xxviii, p. 439.

¹ Cf. *supra*, p. 25, note 3.

To protect the rebel's slave property is to help him to butcher our people and to burn our houses. Upon those who caused the war, and now maintain it, its chief burdens ought to fall. No property of a rebel ought to be free from confiscation—not even the sacred slave. The object of war is to destroy the power of the enemy, and whatever measures are calculated to accomplish that object and are in accordance with the usages of civilized nations ought to be employed. To undertake to put down a powerful rebellion, and at the same time to save and protect all the chief sources of the power of that rebellion, seems to common minds but a short remove from folly. He who is not for the Union unconditionally in this mortal struggle is against it. To treat the enemy gently is to excite his derision. If our soldiers must die, do not let it be of the inactivity and diseases of camps, but let them have the satisfaction of falling like soldiers, amid the roar of battle, and hearing the shouts of victory, then will they welcome it as the tired laborer welcomes sleep. Let us hope that we have not much longer to wait.¹

The war spirit manifested in the legislative and popular support of the document was strengthened by external circumstances which proved more threatening than actually destructive. The proximity of Detroit to Canada exposed it to invasion by the Southern refugees congregated on the opposite bank of the river. Their repeated threats were a source of continual apprehension and this tended to throw odium upon whatever rebel sympathy existed in the locality.²

¹ *Joint Doc.*, 1861, p. 10.

² The newspapers of Detroit for the month of July, 1862, contain numerous warnings for armed defense in case of invasion, and demands for efficient detective service. A mass meeting in that city held July 15 to assist in the recruitment of troops was broken up by a mob which had crossed over from Canada. A second meeting was successfully held and the press observed that from the large number of enlistments an important change in the popular feeling was in evidence. *Detroit Advertiser and Tribune*, July 16, 1862. L. T. Hemans, *History of Michigan*, p. 219.

The discontent with the conduct of the war had increased by the spring of 1863, and the Fusionist victories of the preceding November gave encouragement to whatever anti-war or anti-administration sentiment there was in the composite party. Democratic members of the legislature were emboldened to pass sharp criticism upon the administration in the course of debates upon measures in support of the federal policy.¹ The grievances of the discontented were set forth in the Democratic State platform adopted in convention February 11, 1863,—an irregular proceeding for the “off” year. “The simple issue is now freedom or despotism,” it declared, and evidences of the latter were enumerated as follows:

the suspension of the privilege of the Writ of Habeas Corpus, the arrest of citizens by military power, denial of the right of trial by jury, abridgment of freedom of speech and of the press, a secret police, martial law declared in states not in rebellion, freeing of the slaves of loyal citizens, and the division of the state of Virginia.

In the presidential campaign of 1864, the Republicans were obliged to meet not only the hostility of the Democrats, but a serious schism in their own party. The Republican sentiment in Michigan shared to a considerable degree the ideas of the opposition to Lincoln which developed in the last year of his first term. A feeling was manifest that

¹ Among the hostile speeches was that directed against the administration and the war by Edward G. Morton of Monroe, a town which was a Democratic stronghold. *Adv. and Trib.*, Jan. 25, 1863. Judge Pratt of Calhoun declared that “the people ought to rise up and hurl him (the President) from his chair.” George W. Peck referred to Lincoln as “the despot at Washington, the tool of usurpers,” and declared this a “White Man’s government.” Most of the regular Democratic members were more prudent, however, and the Speaker of the House, Sullivan M. Cutcheon, was a loyal and prudent parliamentarian. *Mich. Coll.*, vol. xxx, pp. 103, 104.

the plan of the administration concerning Reconstruction appeared to minimize the functions of Congress and treat the rebel states with too much leniency. "There is an obvious change," it was observed, "from the compromising and hesitant attitude at the early period of the war," and the case was mildly stated when a leading organ declared that

among the friends of the administration in this state, there is not entire unanimity on all points concerning the restoration of the seceded states. . . . They are generally agreed, however, that the Government has authority to superintend, regulate, and control this process and impose such conditions as the public safety may require.¹

The Wade-Davis Bill, which was passed by Congress July 4, 1864, received the support of the majority of the Michigan delegation, though the Democratic member offered strong resistance,² much to the disgust of a vigorous body of enthusiasts at home. This bill not only assumed that the reconstruction of the states lately in rebellion was a legislative problem, but required the loyalty of at least a majority of the white male adults in order to form a basis for the new state government. This was aimed directly against the theory of the President, that ten per cent of the votes cast at the Presidential election in 1860 formed a sufficient electorate. Further, the bill asserted the power of Congress to abolish slavery within the limits of those

¹ *Adv. and Trib.*, June 14, 22, July 6. The term "Government" probably included Congress as an agent equal to the President. Similar expressions are to be found in the *Lansing State Republican*, July 27, Aug. 3.

² Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. iii, pp. 485-7. *Globe*, Mar. 2, 1864, pp. 1243-4; Apr. 29, pp. 1981-5; Apr. 30, pp. 2011-14; July 1, pp. 3460-1; July 2, p. 3491. The Democratic member was Augustus Baldwin from the fifth district.

states which had lately seceded. It thus abandoned the theory of "perdurance", or continuance of statehood after secession. Those members of the Union had fallen to the status of territories; it was believed, and, as such, were subject to the exclusive authority of the central government.

On the last day of the preceding May, the Radicals met in convention in Cleveland.¹ In the twelfth section of their platform, they declared that Congress, as the representatives of the people, had the exclusive right to restore the states lately in rebellion. Fremont was named to force the retirement of Lincoln, whose policy was considered altogether too lenient. It would be expected from temperament and past convictions that Chandler would have thrown his influence with the opponent of Lincoln, in the interest of a more vigorous prosecution of the war. This was not the case, however, for he labored steadfastly in behalf of Lincoln and he was among those who effected the withdrawal of Fremont. The motive for this action is not evident, but it is probable that he believed a change of executive would be unfortunate at such a crisis, and believed that should Fremont's retirement be followed by the resignation of Montgomery Blair from the cabinet, the lenient attitude of the President would give way to more vigorous activity. Chandler may have felt,—as did many of the Radicals,—that the removal of Blair's influence for mildness and moderation would materially affect Lincoln's point of view, and leave him free to pursue the more rigorous plan suggested by other members of his cabinet. Precisely what Chandler's part was in effecting the withdrawal of Fremont is uncertain, but his efforts within the state were certainly in behalf of Lincoln, and with the soldiers he was particularly influential.²

¹ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. iv, pp. 463-4.

² *Post and Trib. Life of Chandler*, p. 263 *et seq.*

The character of the Unionist movement was fully determined on Fremont's retirement. Early in the preceding year, 1863, it was obvious that the Democracy would be the chief opponent of the party supporting the administration, and a second element would have been added to the opposition had Fremont continued candidate for president. The situation of 1862 would thus have been repeated, though with this difference, that, in 1862, the opposition within the dominant party was based upon personal grounds and was conservative, while in 1864, it was based upon national issues and was radical. The withdrawal of Fremont closed the ranks of the Republican party and brought back the aggressive members, even in Michigan, to the support of the administration.

Its schism being a thing of the past, the party took as its leading issue the preservation of the Union and support of the administration. It came naturally to be thought of as containing all loyal persons, and drew to itself many loyal men who had previously cast their influence with the Fusionist movement in behalf of moderation. This left the Democracy now in Michigan—what it had been in many other states two years before—a party which was, when compared with the Republicans, under suspicion of disloyalty, however erroneous that idea might be. The "Union" party was now set over against the Democracy, which labored under the disadvantage of having the one policy of opposition to the war and hostility toward the administration. The term Unionist had thus changed its meaning within the last two years. In 1862 it meant one opposed to the Radicals who persisted in supporting their leader, Zachariah Chandler, and in working upon the basis of personal politics. As this aggressive element constituted what was, in 1862, understood to be the Republican party, the Union movement was at that date

essentially anti-Republican. After the disappearance in 1864 of personal issues—at least from the foreground—the Union movement bore along the majority of both elements of the Republican party which now joined forces, and directed its opposition against the Democracy. It thus appeared anti-Democratic in its essentials.

As such, the Unionist movement was indeed successful in Michigan, as the popular vote for President showed it with a victory over strong opposition, with the small majority of 16,917 out of a total of 166,125. Lincoln received 55.89 per cent of the popular vote at this election—a decline of 1.74 per cent since 1860—and this, though small, was significant. The vote for Governor corresponded very closely with that for President.¹

Of the 132 members of the state legislature, the Unionists elected 109, and had the powerful majority of 86. All six Congressional districts elected Unionists to Congress, but in the fifth, the majority was very small. It was in this district where there arose the contested election case the next February, which turned upon the legality of the army vote.²

The soldiers' vote for President and Governor gave the Unionist candidates a majority of 75 per cent and in the Congressional elections the majority for several of the Unionists was much greater. There were two obvious reasons for this support offered by the soldier element. In the first place, Chandler had been extremely popular and

¹ Lincoln received 91,521, McClellan 74,604. For governor, Henry H. Crapo received 91,356 votes or 55.16%, while Fenton received 74,293. A few more votes were polled for President, but the difference was negligible. These figures include the returns from seventeen counties which were not received in time to be counted, but nevertheless show their political affiliations. *Mich. Man.*, pp. 216, 217, 219-221; *World Alm.*, pp. 68-70; *Trib. Alm.*, pp. 63, 64.

² This will be considered subsequently, *cf. infra*, ch. ii, p. 70.

had great influence with it, and in the second place, the traditions and associations of the Democracy naturally tended to antagonize the army class.

The distribution of the party vote at this election clearly indicated certain territorial tendencies. Five of the six counties that voted in the northern peninsula went Democratic, and Emmet and Cheboygan, which generally held similar political preferences with their neighbors on the north, also voted for McClellan. The southeastern counties were more evenly divided and showed an unstable party preference—in most cases for the Democracy. Wayne county was constantly Democratic, and with the city of Detroit it has always been recognized as the centre of the state Democracy. Oakland, Macomb and Monroe gave small majorities to the Democratic candidate in 1864, all turned Republican in 1866, and the last returned to the Democracy in 1868. The south and south-central counties frequently presented close votes, while in those toward the west the Republicans predominated.

CHAPTER II

MICHIGAN POLITICS DURING THE PERIOD OF CONGRESSIONAL RESTORATION

MICHIGAN AND PRESIDENTIAL RESTORATION

THE period which intervened between the triumph of the Federal Executive in 1864 and the defeat of his successor, two years later, saw a schism in the reigning party, terminating in the rise of the Conservative or Administration party and the supremacy of the Radical or Congressional faction.

Already in the last session of the Thirty-eighth Congress the first step was taken toward securing equality of the civil rights of the negro. This was the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment early in the year 1865. It received the support of the entire Michigan delegation, as Augustus C. Baldwin, the one Democratic member, now gave it his favorable consideration on the final vote.¹

The question of ratification thus came before the state legislature in its regular session of 1865. The fact that the one Democratic member was friendly to the measure probably had some influence in securing its favorable con-

¹ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. v, p. 50; Riddle, *Recollections of War Times*, p. 324 *et seq.* *Mich. Coll.*, vol. xxix, pp. 591-3; *Trib. Alm.*, p. 51; McPherson, *History of the Rebellion*, p. 258. Mr. Baldwin failed of re-election in 1866, but this is hardly conclusive evidence of disapproval on the part of his constituents. In the general decline of Democratic power in Michigan that year, he probably would have lost his seat had he persisted in his opposition to the amendment.

sideration in the state. There was no marked opposition to its ratification since it was recognized to be merely the carrying out of the Emancipation Proclamation, and accordingly the joint resolution was passed February 2nd.

Whereas American slavery, in its wickedness and infatuation, has added to its many other heinous sins the crime of waging a causeless, cruel and bloody war for the avowed purpose of dividing and destroying the nation, whereby it has forfeited all further right to toleration, . . . it has become necessary to utterly destroy this barbarous foe of civilization, humanity, and religion.¹

Such were the vigorous terms in which the legislature approved the amendment. Some Democratic journals, it is true, had expressed the apprehension that this measure would usher in more objectionable steps in behalf of the negro, but after the ratification of the amendment they were, for the most part, ready to defend it and await later developments.²

In connection with President Lincoln's plan of restoration, the first clear case of disagreement which is of interest in Michigan history, was the speech of Senator Jacob M. Howard on February 25, 1865. This was delivered during the last days of the Thirty-eighth Congress when the question of admitting the Senators-elect from Arkansas and Louisiana was being considered. In this address he rejected the opposite theories of "perdurance" and "state-suicide", and presented a view which might be considered analogous to the "conquered province theory" of Thaddeus Stevens. He asserted that the states had become "ward-provinces of

¹ *Acts*, 1865, pp. 777-8, Joint Res., no. 5.

² *Free Press*, Jan. 13, 1865; *Kal. Gazette*, Jan. 25; *Argus*, Jan. 27, Feb. 3.

the United States progressing toward the maturity of revived loyalty", and the right of restoring these he claimed for Congress alone. He opposed the ten-percent governments of Lincoln, on the ground that "minority government is an evil example inconsistent with our constitution."¹ This early attack upon the policy of the administration was discussed in detail throughout the state, and it became the firm conviction of the leading organs of the dominant party in Michigan that Congress had exclusive jurisdiction over the establishment of loyal government in the rebel states.² It was true, then, that early in the year a small but powerful opposition was growing up in Michigan against Lincoln's policy of restoration, and the political theories he maintained.

The assassination of President Lincoln brought to the leadership in this crisis a man who occupied a position somewhat similar to that of Tyler, twenty-five years before. The exact politics of the Vice-President in each case was a matter for conjecture. The Democrats believed that Mr. Johnson was pledged to the same principles as his predecessor, but saw in him "a man with more firmness, more vigor, and probably more unrelenting passion."³ A leading Democratic journal prophesied that he would find support among all factions except the Radicals, with whom he would not long act in harmony.⁴ In short, the Democracy in Michigan placed great confidence in the new President, and looked forward to his calling Congress "unless prevented by the conviction that it would be swayed by the

¹ *Globe*, Feb. 25, 1865, pp. 1091-1111; Feb. 27, p. 1128.

² *Adv. and Trib.*, Feb. 21, 25, Mar. 2, Apr. 4; *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, Mar. 8, 30; *Lansing State Rep.*, Mar. 22; *Kal. Tel.*, Apr. 7, 26; *Jackson Daily Cit.*, May 4.

³ *Free Press*, Apr. 16, 1865.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Apr. 11.

fanaticism of Wade, Sumner and Stevens—men of that character whose thirst for blood cannot be assuaged.”¹

There was some truth in the charge of the Republicans that the Democracy was inconsistent. During the campaign of 1864, the latter declared that after Johnson had been allied with their party, his appearance on a Republican National ticket was indisputable proof of his apostasy. After his succession to the presidency, they ceased to emphasize this feature of his career, and claimed him again as a reliable member of their party.²

It was true that some members of both parties feared that after his experience as Governor of Tennessee, President Johnson would manifest a bitter animosity toward the rebels. His utterances to the effect that “treason must be made odious,” and that “traitors must be punished and impoverished,”³ naturally led men to expect a rigid application of criminal law to the Confederate leaders. It is not strange, then, that Radicals like Sumner, Wade and Chandler felt a certain grim satisfaction in the prospects of the administration, and a confidence in the President’s determination to inflict upon the rebels the full penalties of the law.⁴

There was little adverse comment upon Johnson’s retention of Lincoln’s cabinet, and the Republicans generally did not foresee the possibilities of the conciliatory counsels of Seward. Among the first steps which the President took towards restoration were the Proclamations of May 9th and

¹ *Free Press*, Apr. 13.

² *Kal. Gazette*, Apr. 18, 1865; *Adv. and Trib.*, Apr. 20; *Lansing State Rep.*, May 7.

³ Speech of Apr. 21, 1865, Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. v, p. 521.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Blaine, *Twenty Years of Congress*, vol. ii, p. 13; *Post and Tribune Life of Chandler*, p. 284; *Adv. and Trib.*, Apr. 18, 1865.

10th respectively.¹ The recognition of the Peirpoint Government in Virginia, and the warning to foreign nations against extending hospitality to the Confederate cruisers since the close of the war, both met with the approval of the leading journals of the state.²

The Amnesty Proclamation of May 29th provided for the pardoning of certain classes, including the rebel leaders, upon personal application, and the amnesty of all other rebels upon the taking of a prescribed oath. Upon the basis of this re-established loyalty, President Johnson proposed to use the old electorate of the South in the process of restoration.³ The proclamation met with favorable comment on the part of the Democrats and many Republicans. A leading Democratic organ pronounced it "statesmanlike and manly,"⁴ while a mild Republican journal declared it "the embodiment of the best judgment of the masses in the state." "There has been a fear," the latter journal continued, "that undue leniency might make treason respectable . . . but to-day every leading traitor stands before the public a great criminal."⁵ Speaking further of the proclamation, the same journal continued: "It is a manifesto to the world that the government fully recognizes that treason has been committed, and even with the fourteen classes excepted, it is as merciful as it is dignified—and none can rightly complain." In the matter of state regulation of suffrage, this conservative Republican organ declared itself in agreement with the President. "As civil communities, those states have the undoubted right to confer the elective

¹ Richardson, *Messages and Papers of the Presidents*, vol. vi, pp. 306-9.

² *Lansing State Rep.* and *Free Press* for May, 1865.

³ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. v, p. 525 *et seq.*

⁴ *Free Press*, May 31, 1865.

⁵ *Adv. and Trib.*, June 6.

franchise upon, or withhold it from, such of their population as they may deem proper." With reference to the conquered province theory, it was declared that in a process wherein the Northern States held the Southern States at their mercy as subject provinces, the distinctive features of Republican government would receive a fatal obscuration. "A state cannot secede from the Union, however much the people within its limits may rebel. Now that the rebellion is ended, the states remain with their former names, boundaries and population, but without laws adapted to their changed conditions."¹

Such were the views of a very prominent Republican organ of the milder type; with the vast majority of the party in Michigan, however, the Amnesty Proclamation marked the beginning of hostility to the President. The reason was obvious. During the months of April and May there had been a general discussion concerning the probable attitude that President Johnson would take upon the question of negro suffrage and the electorate in the South. The Republicans insisted upon one of two alternatives—namely, the complete disfranchisement of all rebels, or the disfranchisement of the leaders only, combined with negro suffrage. They generally preferred the latter, and in this they were probably influenced by the Radical members of their party who a little later became its leaders.²

The Amnesty Proclamation contained no reference to negro suffrage, but, on the other hand provided for the prompt restoring of all rebels, with certain exceptions, to full civil rights. These excepted classes contained the rebel leaders whom the Republicans would have barred abso-

¹ *Adv. and Trib.*, June 13, 1865.

² *Lansing State Rep.*, Apr. 18, May 17; *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, May 26, June 7; Letter of J. M. Howard to J. P. Whittemore, Apr. 3, 1865, in the *Adv. and Trib.*, May 31.

lutely, while under the Proclamation their pardon could be readily granted by special act of the President. In short, the document ignored negro suffrage, and looked to the ultimate if not hasty reinstatement of the white electorate of the South before the war. The majority of the Republicans of the state, and especially the Radicals, were naturally astounded at this turn in Johnson's policy, since they had felt fully convinced, only six weeks before, that he was in harmony with them upon the suffrage question.¹

In a second proclamation issued May 29th, the President made provision for the restoration of North Carolina. He appointed William W. Holden as Provisional Governor, and gave to the old white electorate of the state² the exclusive right to elect members to the constitutional convention, and to serve in the capacity of delegate to that body. Within six weeks a series of similar proclamations followed, which set into motion the machinery for the restoration of Mississippi, Georgia, Texas, Alabama, South Carolina, and Florida. The "ten-percent governments" set up by Lincoln in Louisiana and Arkansas were finally recognized, and the government in Tennessee, organized by President Johnson, himself, as Military Governor, was maintained.³

The appointment of Provisional Governors was promptly denounced by Chandler, who considered them a different class of officers from Military Governors.

I believe it is an office unknown to the constitution and laws of our government, and, in my judgment, the President had no authority to create it. These governors are not sent to the

¹ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. v, p. 523 *et seq.*

² The electorate previous to May 20, 1861, the date of the secession of North Carolina.

³ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. v, p. 526-7; Burgess, *Reconstruction and the Constitution*, p. 35 *et seq.*

Senate for confirmation, nor would it have made them any more governors had we confirmed them, because the Senate and Andrew Johnson together could not have created the office. If there was no authority of law, then it required the combined action of the House of Representatives, the Senate, and the President before an officer could be legally appointed.¹

To the Democrats, these executive acts were "only the old States Rights doctrine properly applied when opposition to the authority of the United States has ceased." The Democracy did not credit the President with going as far as he should, but supported him in all that he did and congratulated him for going in advance of the party which elected him.² There were grave—and as it proved, well-founded—apprehensions among the Democrats that if the Radicals succeeded in creating a popular feeling in favor of negro suffrage, "they would unhesitatingly adopt a policy in Congress of refusing seats to members from states not granting negro suffrage." However, it was thought that the people "generally recognized the inherent right of the states to regulate suffrage for themselves,"³ and the *Free Press* confidently asserted that "Radical opposition to the acts of the administration either in or out of Congress can only delay, not prevent, the restoration of the Union on a cordial and fraternal basis."

By the end of July, the President's plan was fully understood, and the Radicals became completely estranged from the administration. They differed from him widely on the questions of negro suffrage, treatment of the rebel leaders, and the status of the rebel states. The North Carolina

¹ Speech in Detroit, June 12, 1865. The same argument was used February, 1867, with reference to the grounds for impeachment of the President.

² *Free Press*, June 14, 1865.

³ *Ibid.*, June 20.

Proclamation did not create so much dissatisfaction as the proclamations which followed for the other states, since it was thought that the alleged union sentiment there justified a milder policy than ought to be pursued in Mississippi, Georgia, Texas, Alabama, South Carolina and Florida. It was with good reason that the Radicals became convinced that the President had cut loose from them.¹ This "Radical" element of the Republican party in Michigan at first consisted of a few extremely uncompromising leaders who were friends of Sumner and Wade. Chief among them were Zachariah Chandler and Jacob M. Howard. As Johnson's administration progressed, this faction came to control more members of the party.² The circumstances of the coming year would necessitate an alignment of parties in Michigan as elsewhere, and the Conservative Republicans found themselves defending the President against the criticism of the Democrats and Radical Republicans alike. As a middle faction, they must either join the Democracy, advance to the Radical position, or stand alone as a party on the defensive. The last-named alternative was the one adopted, and the process of separation and reorganization was complete by August of the succeeding year. Previous to this time, however, the term "Republican" will be used to include the entire party, and the names "Radical" and "Conservative" will be applied only to factions of that party, and not to separate organizations.

The first convention to assemble in the rebel states for the purpose of constitutional revision was that of Mississippi, August 21st and 22nd.³ Several questions of great importance presented themselves. What proceedings should

¹ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. v, p. 531 *et seq.*

² *Adv. and Trib.*, June 21, July 2; *Lansing State Rep.*, Aug. 8, 1865.

³ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. v, p. 535 *et seq.*

be taken in reference to the ordinances of secession, and to the war debt incurred during the Rebellion? It was but natural that the Radical Republicans of Michigan should demand both a repudiation of the debt in no uncertain terms, and a declaration of the nullity of the ordinances of secession *ab initio*. The Democracy favored the repudiation of the debt, but were not so particular as to the manner in which the ordinances of secession were abrogated.¹

As the time for the meeting of Congress approached, there was general discussion throughout the state as to what action would best be taken with reference to the delegates elected by the recently restored Southern States. The Democrats had expressed apprehensions as early as June that the Republican party, in its determination to secure negro suffrage, would refuse seats to the delegates from states not granting the negroes that right.² The sentiment of the Radicals voiced by Jacob M. Howard was no less intense than the Democrats had feared. "We owe it to the loyal people of the North to exclude the representatives from the late rebellious states," he declared, shortly before leaving for Washington.³ "The states in question are subjugated provinces, whose inhabitants are not loyal to-day, and only submitted to the Union authorities because they were unable to resist," and he demanded the exclusion of all representatives of constituencies still disloyal and unwilling to co-operate with the loyal element.

On December 4th Congress assembled, and on the following day the President's message was read. It con-

¹ *Lansing State Rep.*, *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, *Adv. and Trib.*, *Free Press*, *Argus*, from August to November.

² *Free Press*, June 20, 1865.

³ Speech in Lansing Wed., Nov. 22, 1865, reported in *Lansing State Rep.*, Nov. 24.

tained an exposition of the theory of state perdurance, of which Johnson was a strong defender. As the political system was an "indissoluble union of indestructible states," the states by attempting secession "impaired but did not extinguish their functions as members of the Union." The President attempted to establish his right to prescribe the conditions by which the states could regain their normal position in the Union, upon the ground of his power of pardon.¹ The message was so tactfully written that it appeared not to offend either party. "The message was favorably received in this locality," declared the *Detroit Tribune*, which commended it for its "modest length, amiable temper, clearness and candor."² "The President did well," it continued, "when he honorably avoided placing himself in a position to come into collision with Congress on the question of admitting the Southern members." The Democracy rejoiced that the President insisted upon the recognition of the state government which he had been instrumental in founding, and believed he would never approve of the interference by Congress with suffrage in the states.³

PRESIDENTIAL VERSUS CONGRESSIONAL RESTORATION

With the entrance of the Thirty-ninth Congress upon its first session, the politics of Michigan were led by a delegation which, besides being Unionists, were reliable Republicans. Four of the members had served in the previous Congress, and an equal number were to be re-elected to the succeeding.⁴ Four were thoroughly trained

¹ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. v, p. 546 *et seq.*; Burgess, *op. cit.*, pp. 40, 41.

² *Adv. and Trib.*, Dec. 6, 1865.

³ *Free Press*, Dec. 7.

⁴ Fernando C. Beaman, Charles Upson, John W. Longyear, Thomas W. Ferry, Rowland E. Trowbridge, and John F. Driggs were the mem-

lawyers, while the other two, Driggs and Ferry, represented the industrial interests of the state. The latter was the prominent guard of the extensive lumber interests of Michigan, and was destined to become popular both through his parliamentary skill—which later made him president of the Senate—and his advocacy of soft money. The entire delegation gave consistent support, from the first, to all measures looking to the increased power of Congress over reconstruction, and in this activity they were seconded by the great majority of the dominant party of the state. The Stevens resolution for the appointment of a Joint Committee on Reconstruction, and later, the exclusion from Congress of the delegates of the late rebel states elicited a great deal of discussion which seemed on the whole favorable to the Congressional point of view.¹

The veto of the Freedmen's Bureau Bill was hailed by the Democratic organs as the deserved fate of a measure "unconstitutional, inexpedient, and extravagant," while the President was eulogized for his "courage, loyalty, and firmness."² The Republicans seemed on the whole confident that the bill would be passed over his veto. "Some such measure is absolutely necessary," declared an influential Radical organ, "and a substitute will doubtless be immediately prepared."³

bers of the Thirty-ninth Congress. Ferry and Trowbridge took the seats of Francis W. Kellogg and Augustus C. Baldwin respectively.

¹ *Globe*, Dec. 12, 1865, pp. 24-28, 30; Feb. 20, 1866, pp. 947, 950; Feb. 27, 1866, p. 1053. For comment, *N. Y. Herald*, Dec. 13, T. L. vol. lxiii, p. 139, col. 4. The appointment of Senator Howard to membership in the Joint Committee insured the keenest attention of the constituency to the acts of this body.

² *Free Press*, Feb. 18, 1866. "Monday's session of Congress was memorable as President Johnson for the first time proved his patriotism and firmness by an act which, for boldness and decision under all circumstances, had never been paralleled in the country," *ibid.*, Feb. 21.

³ *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, Feb. 21.

The Civil Rights Bill was opposed by the Democrats upon the principle of non-interference by the general government in matters not clearly delegated to it by the Constitution. In their opinion, there was little chance for doubt concerning the real motive for these measures. "Not a single emotion of solicitude for the welfare of the black race animated the feelings or action of the Radicals in Congress. . . . Their action has been dictated by what they thought was policy, in their anxiety to perpetuate the rule of their party, . . . and they rejoiced if anything oppressive or disagreeable to the Southerners could be included."¹ The Radicals claimed to see clearly that the President's purpose in his vetoes was "to gain the support of the entire rebel population of the South, as well as the entire Democratic party of the North."²

It was at this point that the real struggle began between the Presidential and Congressional factions, and the failure of the latter in two of its early undertakings caused a deep resentment which led to open hostility in Michigan as elsewhere. Many organs which up to this time had not expressed strong antagonism to the deliberate and scrutinizing policy of Congress were now alarmed at the extremes to which that body was willing to go. A reaction is clearly visible from this time onward, and this gave rise to the faction which would be known later as the Administration party.³

It was in connection with the anxiety of the Republicans over the second passage of the Civil Rights Bill, that Gov-

¹ *Free Press*, Mar. 15.

² *Post*, Mar. 17, 1866.

³ Observations to this effect are to be found in the *Adv. and Trib.*, Apr. 13, 27, Sept. 19; *Free Press*, Apr. 18, May 2, Nov. 9; *Argus*, Apr. 20, 27. This is set forth in "The Mission of the Administration," an anonymous pamphlet, in vol. v, *Jenison Collection*.

ernor Crapo made the grave mistake of issuing a proclamation for the observance of Thursday, April 19th, as a day of fasting and prayer for the successful reconstruction of the Union.¹ Party spirit was concealed by the phraseology of the proclamation, but as it came from a governor who prided himself upon his violent radicalism, it was generally regarded as a partisan affair. Many influential Republicans foresaw the unfortunate results of such a step, and knew that it would become effective material in the hands of the opposition. It was indeed true that this policy of confusing religion with politics, hereafter referred to as "Crapo-politico-religion," was extremely opportune for the cause of the Democrats.²

After the opening of the Thirty-ninth Congress, with its multitude of proposed amendments to the federal constitution, Michigan resounded with the discussion of the various plans submitted in Congress. There was confidence among the Democrats that should these or similar measures pass both houses, they would fail of ratification by the required number of states.³ The first draft of the proposed Fourteenth Amendment, as it was pre-

¹ *Argus*, April 13, 1866. "After a glorious contest in the field of battle, let us not vainly imagine that all danger is past. . . . It was indeed a mighty achievement to scatter to the wind the armed hosts of treason and rebellion which were arrayed against us. . . . But the work is not yet finished. We have a mightier victory still to achieve in the reconstruction of a united country. Now when our political skies are clouded by antagonism between the ruling powers at the capital of our Republic, . . . let us seek . . . the Divine Aid to subdue our pride, to surrender our wills, to abandon our prejudices, and to reconstruct the Republic upon the broad principles of Right, Humanity, Justice, and Eternal Truth."

² The fast day was not generally observed, and it was remarked that "it ought to be a long time before any future governor of our state follows the example of Governor Crapo." *Argus*, April 27; also *Free Press*, April 20.

³ *Free Press*, Jan. 7, 28, Feb. 2, 1866.

sented to the House by Mr. Stevens, seemed to surprise many Radicals, but they promptly rallied to its support and declared that "as a policy of cautious expediency, it was designed to carry more states than could otherwise be carried."¹

On account of the illness of Senator Fessenden, the chairman of the Joint Committee on the part of the Senate, Howard presented to that body the five articles proposed as the Fourteenth Amendment. In connection with the first, he commented upon the need of a definition of the term "citizen", which occurs twice in the Constitution without a statement of its precise meaning. He pointed to the fact that the right to vote was not intended to be among the rights conferred. Though he plainly stated that he would be glad to see the negroes enjoy suffrage, at least to some extent, he declared that "the right of suffrage was not, in law, one of the privileges or immunities secured by the Constitution. . . . It has always been regarded in this country as the result of positive local law." This is unmistakable evidence that he, as well as the majority of the committee, was opposed to the assumption by the federal government of the regulation of suffrage.² The main current of Republican opinion throughout the state seemed in harmony with this view, though several of the most radical organs mentioned with approval the assumption by the central government of the right to regulate suffrage. There was repeatedly expressed the fear that the remaining right to vote would soon be conferred upon the negro by Congress, since this was the one privilege of citizenship that was withheld from him.³

¹ *Adv. and Trib.*, May 1.

² *Globe*, May 23, pp. 2764-8; *Lansing State Rep.*, May 30.

³ *Kal. Tel.*, May 25; *Adv. and Trib.*, June 1. Speech of Augustus C. Baldwin, Pontiac, May 29, vol. vi, *Pol. Pamphlets, Jenison Coll.*

The second section of the proposed amendment had for its aim, Howard asserted, the encouragement of the states to admit their colored population to the right of suffrage. This, he insisted, could not be considered a violation of the most rigid interpretation of the Constitution. The third article, which excluded all participants in the insurrection from the right to vote for Representatives in Congress and for Electors of the President and Vice-President, Howard considered defective and of no avail. There was a consistent demand of the party throughout the state that the disqualification extend to the holding of all offices under the federal or state governments. It was further urged that in the fourth section the debt incurred in suppressing the rebellion should be declared inviolate.¹ The fact that these changes were all embodied in the final draft as agreed upon by both houses was a source of great rejoicing among the Republicans of the state and much of the honor was attributed to Senator Howard. The amendment received the hearty support of the Michigan delegation, and that fact insured its adoption and defense by the Republicans of the state as their principal issue.²

THE ISSUES IN THE CAMPAIGN OF 1866

An exceptional feature of this campaign in Michigan as elsewhere was the threat of extreme measures and possible violence resorted to by each party. The Republicans plainly spoke of impeachment, while the Democrats were accused of hinting at usurpation on the part of the President. There were expressions on both sides of extreme possibilities of an armed clash. A leading Democratic organ remarked that "a part of the system of Radical tac-

¹ *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle, Adv and Trib.*, May 25.

² *Globe* for May and June, 1866, pp. 2869, 2890-8, 2900, 3042, 3149; *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle, Post*, June 14; *Free Press*, Aug. 15.

tics in the present canvass is to educate the public ear to a familiarity with the idea of impeaching the President. To prevent a shock, they at present permit only such leaders as Butler and Phillips to make the threat openly; and most of their organs deprecate the use of such threats, under cover of insinuations intended to carry the same idea." To combat the impeachment idea, the Democrats professed to see as an immediate consequence "the beginning of civil war in every city and village of the North."¹

On the other hand, there appeared apprehensions among the Republicans of the state that the President "would turn usurper and act a Cromwell," and this gave sufficient ground for urging a continuous session of Congress. "A danger to be guarded against," according to the Republican point of view, was the "summoning of an executive session and attempting to get the Senators to vote on their own admission and the President's appointments. If loyal members refuse to recognize them, the Copperheads and Rebels could meet by concert and thus convene a majority, and in case of a threatened interference, the President as Commander-in-chief of the Army could defend the Rebel Senate."² There were, however, Republican organs that objected to the continued session on the ground that "a general removal of officeholders in the recess could work less injury to the party than the spinning out of the session."³

¹ *Free Press*, Apr. 5. The *Free Press* quoted liberally from the *Cincinnati Commercial*, a Johnson sympathizer, which it naturally considered the "ablest Republican paper in the North."

² *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, July 1, 1866. The *Post*, Oct. 25, remarked, however, that if the rumor was true that Sec. Stanton had filled all the vacancies in the regular army without the knowledge or assent of President Johnson, the army could not be used in support of his ambitious schemes.

³ *Adv. and Trib.*, July 22, 1866.

The Democrats opposed negro suffrage principally on two grounds. In the first place, the black race had not shown sufficient willingness to participate in the war, it was urged, to warrant taking so grave a step.¹ Various utterances of the Democratic press to this effect gave the Radicals ground for charges that insurrection and treachery of the blacks were encouraged by such sentiments. They were undoubtedly very dangerous comments, considering the position of the Democracy in Michigan, and this argument certainly did not add strength to the party. The main reason for withholding the right of suffrage from the negro was the presumption of what the Democrats declared to be a fact, "the inherent inferiority of the race." When it should be sufficiently advanced "to appreciate something of the duties and obligations of citizens", it was thought time enough to consider suffrage. Negro office-holding was feared as the direct consequence of negro suffrage, and the Democrats frequently expressed an apprehension of the possible subordination of the whites to the blacks in the states where the latter constituted the majority of popula-

¹ "How much did the negro do for his freedom?" was asked time and again during the campaign. "When Lee was in Richmond, and Johnson at Chattanooga, with almost the entire available force of the rebellion within their command, what a scattering there would have been at any kind of a hostile demonstration from the black people. Had the race possessed the faintest aspiration for liberty, what an opportunity to grasp it. Other races have plotted and fought to obtain that boon!" *Free Press*, Jan. 12, 1866. The following appeared in the number for Feb. 15: "For a race who had no blow to strike in the rear, when their friends were striking in the front, there is poor argument for a bloody effort to wrench from the white man the privilege of which they have no conception. The only danger arises from the influence of such brutalized wretches as Mr. Sumner, whose 'wish is father to the thought.'" With similar vigor his prediction of a race war on the denial of equal suffrage was refuted by the Democrats.

tion.¹ Besides, the Democrats denied that the control of the suffrage was vested in Congress. There was but one source for impartial suffrage—the states could establish it either by independent action among themselves or by the ratification of the constitutional amendment.² The Radicals certainly found themselves in an embarrassing situation, as the Democrats repeatedly took occasion to observe. While demanding negro suffrage for the South, they failed to grant it in their own state. It was a glaring inconsistency which was never satisfactorily defended.³

The fiscal questions in 1866 were decidedly less important than in succeeding campaigns, being relegated to the background by reconstruction disputes. The Democrats called attention to the “great questions of taxes and currency in which the people are so vitally interested,” in place of the agitation over suffrage. They favored such tariff,—“not prohibitory,—as will produce the greatest amount of revenue.” They declared for the payment of the interest upon the national debt, and its general discharge, and advocated the taxation of government securities as well as other property.⁴ The attitude toward resumption was not entirely clear. Both parties desired the ultimate return to a specie basis, but the means were not agreed upon. The “unfavorable balance of trade” was thought to impede prompt resumption, and the export tax upon cotton advocated by some persons was at the disadvantage of requiring a constitutional amendment.⁵ The

¹ “Ninety-nine out of every hundred negroes have not the slightest idea what the ballot is. A horse or a hand-saw may have definite significance to them but any idea of government . . . has never reached their understanding.” *Free Press*, Jan. 21, 1866; *Kal. Gazette*, Mar. 15.

² *Argus*, Mar. 23, 1866; *Marshall Expounder*, June 14.

³ *Muskegon News*, Oct. 24, 1866; *Free Press*, Nov. 6.

⁴ *Free Press*, Jan. 20, 1866.

⁵ *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, Feb. 16.

Republicans had, therefore, what they considered to be a strong argument for such tariff as would check importation and stop the balance against us,—practically a prohibitory tariff,—and this the Democrats refused to support.

THE CAMPAIGN

The anxiety on the part of the Democrats had been manifested by an agitation for an early convention. Objection was made on the grounds of political expediency, and the latter view prevailed in the end.¹ There was a general belief that a campaign of two months was preferable to one of four, and a call was issued accordingly for the convention to meet in Detroit, Wednesday, September 5th. The Republicans accused the Democrats of waiting to unite with the soldiers. "They see they cannot beat the Republicans fairly, but they will wait until the soldiers hold a state convention of their own, and then find it 'inexpedient' to put up another ticket. But they don't know the men they have to deal with, for four-fifths of the soldiers of Michigan are Republicans."² The prophecy was mistaken,³ for the soldiers of Michigan never went so far as to organize in state convention, and put a ticket into the field. They were earnestly sought by the regular parties, and their allegiance was divided almost in the proportion guessed by the paper quoted. The Democrats did, however, combine with another organization,—the new National Union or Administration party,—and they accepted its ticket.

¹ "The Radicals are to be indicted and put on trial, and to do this understandingly and effectually, it is better to wait until they, through their leaders in Congress, have made and closed their record, if they are going to. When Congress has adjourned, or when it has determined that it will not adjourn, . . . a Democratic State Convention will be better prepared to mark out the Campaign". Editorial of *Argus*, June 1, 1866.

² *Lansing State Rep.*, July 18, 1866.

³ Cf. *infra*, p. 65.

The state campaign was opened August 9th by a Johnson mass-meeting held in Detroit to consider the appointment of delegates to the Philadelphia Convention and to pass resolutions indicative of the party's policy. The attendance was very large and the proceedings were entirely harmonious. The personnel consisted of able lawyers and politicians of both parties, while the soldier element was well represented by the presence of Generals Custer, Wilcox, Williams, and McReynolds.¹ A resolution was unanimously adopted approving "the restoration policy of President Andrew Johnson, the admission to their seats in Congress of the loyal and duly-elected members, and the principles set forth in the call for the Philadelphia National Union Convention." In order to distinguish themselves from the Copperhead element, they declared that "the admission of those would be unwise who, in the states not in rebellion, failed to support the government during the war."²

During the same day in Detroit, the Democratic State Central Committee were considering the propriety of send-

¹ Among the Republicans who "bolted" from their party were Alfred Russell, A. Bliss, and James F. Joy, the last of whom had been an earnest Whig, later a firm Republican, and had served one term in the legislature at the beginning of the war. The Union Democrats were represented in part by Byron G. Stout, who had been a Republican until 1862, when he became a Democrat and was nominated for governor. General Custer cared little for politics, and his only prominence in this field occurred this year when he was sent as delegate to the Philadelphia Convention, and to the Soldiers' Convention in Cleveland. Generals Alpheus S. Williams and A. T. McReynolds were Democrats who later received nominations to Congress, the former in 1874, on the Democratic and Reform ticket, the latter in 1872. *Mich. Biographies; Rep. Men of Mich.*

² *Free Press*, Aug. 10, 1866; for comment, *New York Herald*, Aug. 10 in T. L., vol. lxvii, p. 294, col. 2; *New York Times*, Aug. 12, in T. L., vol. lxvii, p. 314, col. 4.

ing delegates to Philadelphia. The Johnson mass meeting discussed the same subject and thought it best to leave to the Democrats the appointment of the delegates. As there was not time to call a convention for the purpose, the Central Committee decided to consider themselves empowered to make the appointments, and these were duly accepted by the National Union party with "implicit confidence." The National Unionists began to draw close to the Democrats, and it was thus that mutual confidence was first shown between the two parties which in a month were to combine in order to combat their common adversary. The Democrats had from the first, as would be expected, discouraged the formation of a new party, and had invited the National Unionists to join with them.¹ The union of the two organizations was effected, however, by the coalition of the Democracy with the National Union party a month later, and by the adoption of the ticket of the latter.

The Republican State Convention of Thursday, August 30th, was the earliest of the three, and naturally laid down lines for the coming campaign. The first steps toward practical fusion of the two elements of opposition were already accomplished, and the call for the convention had wisely included "War Democrats" among those invited.² The proceedings were declared unusually harmonious, and congratulations were offered the soldiers of the Union, the state administration, and the delegation in Congress. The theory that by rebellion the states ceased to be states and fell to the status of territories was strictly adhered to, and the exclusive power of Congress over restoration was clearly set forth.

¹ *Free Press*, Feb. 20, 1866.

² *Lansing State Rep.*, Aug. 30, Sept. 5, 1866, *Kal. Tel.*, Sept. 6. William A. Howard of Detroit, one of the most prominent Republicans of the state, was chairman of the convention.

By their acts of treason and rebellion, and by their erection of governments in hostility to the United States, the rebel communities disrupted their civil society, abrogated their political institutions, and left their States without governments known to the country, or recognized by the government of the United States. . . . To Congress alone belongs the imperative duty of declaring when any such state is properly reorganized, and any government therein is legitimately constituted so as to resume its former political relations with the national government.

It was further declared that "in the determination of such questions, it is the right as the duty of Congress to guard against future danger to the peace and stability of the Republic," by requiring the people of each state by their conduct to give "satisfactory proofs of their loyalty."¹ The duty was proclaimed imperative of protecting the negroes,—"those who remained loyal to the United States and who are, in a great degree, incapable of self-protection in the midst of a hostile element." The Congressional plan of reconstruction and the constitutional amendment were regarded "fundamental and indispensable to the future peace of the country," and a change in the basis of representation was declared necessary in the altered condition of the nation. "Exclusion from office of leading rebels and actual perjured traitors is the mildest and most generous terms of amnesty ever offered to a rebellious enemy," the platform declared, and the conception of a "White Man's Government" instead of "God's Government for Man" was denounced as "political blasphemy." This body of resolutions was, as the Republicans admitted, a radical one, though it was not so extravagant in self-praise as those of succeeding years.

¹ *Post*, Aug. 31, 1866; *Ann. Cyc.*, 1866, p. 507. There was apparent a striking similarity to the views of Sumner concerning the guaranties of loyalty, and to the declarations of the Republican platforms of the New England states of that year.

Great care was exercised in the selection of a ticket. There was a strong opposition to Governor Crapo on the ground that a soldier would receive a greater following. Several possibilities for the gubernatorial candidacy were mentioned, but the opponents were unable to agree, and the prestige of the "two-term principle" was credited by them with his renomination. The soldier class was complimented by the nomination from their class of five candidates¹ who were intended to combat the six subsequently chosen by the Democrats, one of whom, General Alpheus S. Williams, headed the ticket. The Republicans chose Carl Schurz and Zachariah Chandler as delegates to the Convention of Northern Republicans and Southern loyalists which was to meet in Philadelphia, September 3rd.²

The Johnson supporters met in Detroit, Wednesday, September 5th, in accordance with the call issued by the mass convention of August 9th. Extreme enthusiasm had been shown over the Philadelphia Convention, and the call for a grand mass ratification meeting to endorse its action was combined with a call for a nominating convention to put into the field a National Union State ticket. This move was deemed impolitic by an influential faction,³ who favored postponement of the choice of candidates until the day

¹ The five soldiers nominated by the Republicans were as follows: Gen. Dwight May, for Lieutenant Governor, Gen. Oliver Spaulding, Sec. of State, Gen. Wm. L. Stoughton, Attorney-General, Gen. Wm. Humphrey, Auditor-General, and Gen. Benjamin D. Pritchard, Land Commissioner. Gen. May entered the war in 1861 as Captain, and remained in active service until its close when he was made Brigadier. Generals Spaulding, Stoughton, Humphrey, and Pritchard also rose from captaincies and the last was popular as the captor of Jefferson Davis. This subject received comment in the *N. Y. Tribune*, Sat., Sept. 29, T. L., vol. lxviii, p. 279, col. 3.

² *Reminiscences of Carl Schurz*, pp. 212-3.

³ *Argus*, July 6, 1866; *Free Press*, Aug. 3, 19.

following the one proposed, when they could agree with the Democrats in convention upon one ticket. The regular date was observed, however, and it was for the Democrats rather than the Unionists to make the first advance toward coalition. Full consciousness of the gravity of the occasion seemed to pervade the meeting. The temporary chairman declared in his address that this was "perhaps the last attempt to preserve intact the integrity of the Union," and referred to the period as "the most momentous crisis in our nation's history."¹ Similar sentiments were expressed by the permanent chairman, Gen. C. O. Loomis. "The present time is considered one of peril in that . . . an attempt is now being made to make the victory barren of results. The right of representation," he urged, "belonged under the Constitution to the eleven states formerly seceded. It is a right inherent which they possess, without condition other than that prescribed in the Constitution; . . . and any who would prescribe other conditions are just as rebellious as those who took up arms against us."²

The party received a permanent organization in the appointment by the chairman of a State Executive Committee composed of one representative from each county. The resolutions were similar to those of August 9th.³ They declared that the "admission of loyal men into the Congress from all the states is essential to the complete restoration of the Federal Union and the maintenance of the Constitution upon which this Union is founded." The favor of the soldier element was courted by pointing to the appearance of veterans among the nominees as testimony of the high esteem in which they were held as "the defenders of the

¹ Address may be found in *Pol. Pamphlets*, vol. v, *Jenison Coll.*

² *Free Press*, Sept. 5, 1866; *Kal. Gazette*, Sept. 7.

³ *Argus*, Sept. 7; *Ann. Cyc.*, pp. 508-9.

integrity of the Union." Gen. Alpheus S. Williams headed the state ticket.¹ He was formerly a Whig of the Henry Clay school, and retired from politics after the dissolution of that party. From a résumé of the past affiliations of the candidates, it may fairly be inferred that the predominating influence was very hostile to Congress, for one-half of the new party's candidates were life-long Democrats, while the others were dissatisfied Republicans.

The Democratic State Convention met the following day and adopted the Unionist ticket. After complimenting the soldiers, the convention expressed strong disapproval of the Radicals' conduct and endorsed the Philadelphia Convention of August 14th.² The Democrats declared that "the Democracy has risen above party action," by its acceptance of the National Union ticket and its invitation to "all good citizens to unite in this crisis without regard to antecedents." They gave a distinctly reform character to the party by the arraignment of the Republicans on charges of "heavy taxation, wasteful and unfair legislation, and a vicious system of currency." The Democrats declared themselves the true representatives of the people, and as the Republicans had advocated shorter hours of labor, both parties began that

¹ Gen. J. G. Parkhurst, Col. George Gray, and Col. Louis Dillman were candidates for the offices of Lieutenant-Governor, Attorney-General, and Land Commissioner respectively, and they had been staunch lifelong Democrats. Col. Bradley Thompson, candidate for Secretary of State, was a Republican who refused to endorse the radical principles of that party. Luther H. Trask, nominee for State Treasurer, and Gen. George Spaulding, candidate for Auditor-General, were in a similar position. The two non-political nominations were for Superintendent of Public Instruction, and for Member of the State Board of Education.

² *Free Press, Argus*, Sept. 7, 1866; *Ann. Cyc.*, p. 508. "The country is threatened by an unscrupulous faction in Congress who propose to hold power at all hazards in violation of all law and who, unless arrested, will precipitate another war upon us more deadly than the last."

recognition of the laboring class which was to become of greater importance within the next ten years.

The soldiers and sailors of Michigan¹ met in Detroit nine days later to appoint delegates to the Cleveland Convention. The invitation was extended to "all those soldiers and sailors who approve of the policy of the President of the United States, and of the restoration of harmony and good feeling between the different sections of our common country,—and who are in favor of the admission of loyal representatives from the states lately in rebellion to seats in the two houses of Congress."² The soldiers of Michigan never attained a separate organization or framed a body of resolutions of their own, as some Republicans believed they would. Their allegiance was divided for the reason that both parties had wisely placed several military names on their respective tickets and both tried to win their support by eulogistic resolutions. The fact was evident, however, after the election, that a large majority of the soldiers of the state adhered to the Republican party, though the exact number cannot be ascertained.

The campaign in Michigan, as elsewhere, was extremely vigorous, and the Republican organization and party management were most effective. The state organization known as "Boys in Blue" under the leadership of Russell A. Alger was very active, especially in the southeast portion of the state. Among the speakers of national importance who were appointed to canvass the state were Carl Schurz, Schuyler Colfax, and Gen. Butler, while the prominent state politicians were Chandler, Ferry, Trowbridge, Crapo, Beaman and Blair.³ It is very probable that some of the ex-

¹ Cf. *supra*, p. 58.

² *Argus*, Aug. 31, 1866.

³ *Post*, Oct. 25, 29, 1866. The gist of the campaign addresses, which were on the whole more rampant with party spirit than those of

treme views expressed by Mr. Chandler tended to alienate a faction of his party. This fact would undoubtedly have appeared had not the President caused a similar revulsion in the opposite direction.¹ A very active part was taken by the *Detroit Post* which was, from the first, recognized as the official Radical organ of the state. Behind it stood Senator Chandler with an abundance of funds at his command, and at the head of its editorial staff was Carl Schurz.²

The personal element in the campaign had immense influence in Michigan as elsewhere—perhaps more—as several of her politicians had acquired the reputation for a strength of character amounting to eccentricity. The importance of the personal element began to appear, of course, after the

the Democrats, were the defense of the Fourteenth Amendment and the ascription to the Democrats of the responsibility for the Rebellion and its consequences. Speech of Austin Blair, Wednesday, Oct. 3, Representative Hall, Lansing, reported in the *Lansing State Rep.*, Oct. 10. The probability of the assumption by the General Government of the rebel war debt, if Johnson's policy were sustained, was one of Chandler's favorite subjects. Speech at Lansing, Oct. 17, with comment in the *Post*, Nov. 5. He declared that the method would be to sell to members of Congress, in order to pass the measure, a quantity of scrip at several cents on the dollar, their notes being payable in ten days or thereabouts after the passage of the law. "Forever repudiate the rebel debt and adopt an amendment to this effect, and such a measure could never be undone by a corrupt Congress." This argument resembled closely the guaranties urged by Sumner in his speech at the Worcester Convention of the same year. Insistence upon the original claims against England with legal interest was also common to both, but Chandler's demand for the Canadas as a "fair compensation for all the damages received" was still more extreme than the other Radicals could endorse.

¹ *Free Press*, Feb. 27, Oct. 19, 1866; *Marshall Statesman*, Oct. 25.

² The first issue of the *Daily Post* was that of March 27, 1866. After the advent of this rival, the *Detroit Advertiser and Tribune* became the avowed enemy of Chandler and the Radicals, and entered upon a middle course. Farmer, *op. cit.*, vol. i, p. 684; *Reminiscences of Carl Schurz*, pp. 211, 212; *Mich. Coll.*, vol. xxx, pp. 507-517; *Detroit Evening News*, Feb. 25, 1876.

President's White House Speech of February 22nd. The Democratic organs were naturally loyal to him and emphasized his policy rather than his manner, which was sometimes mentioned in an apologetic strain.¹ The Republicans on their side ably seized their advantage. They compared the President to Fillmore, while the Democrats saw resemblance to Andrew Jackson. The *Post* shrewdly alluded to the campaign of 1860 when Johnson "bolted the regular Democratic party and stumped the states of Mississippi and Tennessee with Davis against Douglas."² "We are becoming more and more convinced every day that it [the President's tour] will prove a real Republican victory."³ We rejoice that his natural arrogance and his impetuous, irascible, and irrational temper . . . were so thoroughly exposed and illuminated by his brutal harangue at Cleveland." Such was the judgment of the leading radical organs of the state. It was to be expected that the visit of the Presidential party would stimulate harsh criticism on the part of the Republicans, especially of Detroit. They remarked that it was only political tact to arrange for the company of Grant and Farragut in the excursion, as the enthusiasm which would undoubtedly be shown them could be con-

¹ "The telegraphic report could not do justice to the President's diction and eloquence. He will stand as the Preserver of his country, a title no less exalted and no less dear to the American people than that of 'Father of his country.'" *Free Press*, Feb. 24, 1866. "The Serenade speech could not be excelled for plainness and directness to the object,—which was to explain the difference between himself and the traitors and disunionists in Congress. It went directly to the spot without circumlocution or mercy." *Free Press*, April 20.

² Sept. 8, 1866. One Radical organ remarked that Mr. Johnson's plan received strong support from four Ex-Presidents—Fillmore, Pierce, Buchanan and Jeff. Davis. *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, Apr. 24.

³ The Presidential party in "swinging 'round the circle" visited Detroit on the 4th of September.

strued in honor of the President.¹ The President was not the victim of all the ridicule of the radical press. Seward's speeches at Auburn, New York, and in New York City, in which he predicted "reconciliation and peace", were generally made light of as predicting an impossibility and showing little foresight.²

THE ELECTION IN MICHIGAN

The results of the November elections were not surprising to those who had closely observed the trend of affairs in Michigan. When the poll was taken the Radicals found they had an average majority of more than 3,000 in each Congressional district, and in each of the two immense districts comprising the northern and central counties, the majority reached 6,500. "The contest in Michigan is measurably between Radicals and Conservatives," observed the *New York Tribune*, and it considered that the former "had the advantage of popularity and numbers."³ Throughout the campaign the Radicals had expressed certainty of their victory. "Our delegation in the next Congress," declared the *Post* confidently, "will present an unbroken front of radically loyal men elected by majorities that will show this to be . . . the Massachusetts of the West."⁴ If the spring elections were indicative of the relative position of the parties, the Republicans certainly were justified in expecting victory. The returns regularly showed an increase in their majorities where they won, and increased followings

¹ *Post*, Sept. 4, 1866. It further referred to the delegation of Loyal Southerners from the Philadelphia Convention which would travel the same route pursued by the President "to tell the people the true situation of affairs."

² *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, May 24, 1866. *Post*, July 3, August 31.

³ *Sat.*, Sept. 29, 1866.

⁴ *Aug.* 31.

in the territory of the opposition.¹ In the November elections, the Radicals made still more important gains, and claimed a "sweep" even in old Democratic strongholds.²

All six members elected to the lower house of Congress were Republicans, and the personnel remained unchanged save in the case of the third district, which was now represented by Ex-Governor Austin Blair in place of Hon. John W. Longyear. The Michigan delegation had satisfied the expectations of their party, and the most influential Republican organs cast their influence in favor of their return.³ While some of the Republican candidates received approximately two-thirds of the votes cast in their respective districts, the victory was exceedingly close in the first, third, and fifth.⁴ The Democratic membership in the lower house of the state legislature was reduced from 21 to 17, while their remnant of influence in the upper house was maintained by the election of two out of 32 senators. The party balance was thus more favorable than ever to the Republicans, as their joint majority rose from 86 to 95:

¹ *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, Mar. 30, 1866. *Adv. and Trib.*, Mar. 31; *Lansing State Rep.*, Apr. 4.

² "In this city, (Detroit), our gains are so heavy that another campaign may entirely redeem it from Democratic rule." *Post*, Nov. 7; *Free Press*, Nov. 8, 10. The statistical sources for the election were the *Mich. Man.*, 1867, pp. 251-3; *Ann. Cyc.*, pp. 507-510; *Trib. Alm.*, *World Alm.* The newspapers consulted were as follows: *The Post*, *Adv. and Tribune*, *Free Press* of Detroit; *Mich. Argus* of Ann Arbor; *Jackson Citizen*, *Jackson Patriot*; *Marshall Statesman*, *Marshall Exponent*; *Battle Creek Journal*; *Kal. Gazette*, *Kal. Telegraph*; *National Dem.* of Cassopolis; *Niles Rep.*, *Hillsdale Daily Standard*, of the southern portion of the State; *St. Clair Rep.*; *Wolverine Citizen* of Flint; *Bay City Weekly Journal*; *Lansing State Rep.*; *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*; *Muskegon News*, of the central northern portion of the state.

³ *Lansing State Rep.*, July 25; *Post*, Aug. 2.

⁴ The vote in the First Congressional District was 22,197 Rep., to 20,595 Dem.; in the Third, 19,268 to 16,268; and in the Fifth, 16,347 to 14,622. *Trib. Alm.*, p. 35.

Governor Crapo received 58.83 per cent of the vote and was re-elected by a majority of almost 30,000, while the other names on the ticket received even stronger support.¹ The proposed constitutional amendment granting soldiers' suffrage and the proposition to revise the state constitution were both favored by large majorities.²

An incident connected with the Soldiers' Voting Law had proved very unfortunate for the Democratic party in the state. This was the law which the proposed constitutional amendment was intended to affirm beyond question. The contested election case in the fifth district arising from the election of 1864 brought into discussion the law providing for the taking of the vote of soldiers in the field. Mr. Baldwin, the Democratic claimant, alleged that the law was unconstitutional on the ground that it contravened the provision requiring residence in the state three months, and in the township or ward ten days, previous to voting.³ The

¹ The vote stood 96,746 to 67,708, excluding the returns from two wards in Detroit which were rejected for alleged irregularities. They would have increased Crapo's majority by 456. A Democratic mayor was elected in Detroit by 360 majority, which showed a reduction in the party's following of 500 since the last election. The Republicans declared that even with such results, "a large number did not visit the polls on Tuesday." *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, Nov. 7, 1866.

² The former by 86,354, to 13,094, the latter by 79,505 to 28,623. Upon these questions,—the second of which was of great importance,—a large number abstained from voting. There were 56,000 more who expressed their preference for governor and members of Congress than voted upon the question of constitutional revision. Over twice as many Democrats absented themselves from the polls as Republicans, notwithstanding their comparative weakness. The minor parties were not yet prominent. The Labor Union Candidate for Governor received 200 votes in Ionia, whose majority went strongly Republican.

³ *Globe*, Feb. 13, 1866, pp. 839-845. Pol. Pamphlets, vol. 3, no. 6, *Jenison Coll.* He contended that the majority of 710 for Mr. Trowbridge would be changed to a majority in his favor "by the exclusion of 1179 illegal votes cast in camp under the Soldiers' Suffrage Act." The victory of Trowbridge was accounted for in this way by the

controversy inevitably tended to antagonize the soldier element whose favor both parties were trying to win. The acceptance of the majority report in favor of the Republican claimant incensed the Democratic journals of the state, and they unfortunately diminished their following by their continued denunciation of the popular measure. In 1864, the Democracy commanded approximately one-fourth of the soldiers' vote, and there are indications that this support was materially diminished two years later.¹

The Democrats were generally agreed upon the reasons for what they were frank to admit was an overwhelming defeat. There had been evident a party apathy throughout the state growing out of either an over-confidence in strongly Democratic centers, or a conviction of certain defeat in Republican districts. There was concealed dissatisfaction at the union with the Conservative Republicans who were openly charged with "coldness and open treachery" and the failure to give any support to the Democracy. The Republican gubernatorial vote rose from 55.16 per cent of the total in 1864 to 58.83 per cent, and even the occasion of a party schism failed to bring out all the votes.

The Northern Peninsula was more evenly divided between the two parties than in 1864, and four of the seven counties voted Democratic. The southern and south central counties gave the Republican candidates on the average 60 to 75 per cent of their votes, while every county in the three lowest tiers, save Wayne, was more evenly balanced,

Democratic organs; "It is thought that this will compensate for the escape of Raymond, Darling and a few others, (Conservative Republicans) from Thad. Stevens' pocket, and keep a two-thirds majority in readiness for an occasion." *Argus*, Mar. 9, 1866.

¹ There is, of course, no separate data for this year to show the exact proportion, as there was in 1864, but current comments point to this conclusion. *Argus*, Nov. 16; *Marshall Statesman*, Nov. 22; *Adv. and Trib.*, Nov. 28, 1866.

and several changed their allegiance within the next two years.

The party position in Michigan in 1866 was very similar to that of 1872. Both years the Democracy united with the disaffected minority of the Republican party, and adopted its ticket. Though the reform element was absent in 1866, the general subject upon which the dominant party divided was, in both cases, the method of reconstruction. It is remarkable that the Democracy—though a decidedly minority party in Michigan—should have chosen both years to ally itself with a group who had previously been members of the hostile party. The sacrifice was, however, far less in 1866 than six years later, as both parties to the coalition had undoubtedly given strong support to the old "Union" organization. It is also strange that in Michigan political literature of the period, the regular names were employed more generally in reference to the parties than the terms "Radical" and "Conservative". This was contrary to the practice in many of the states, and in all probability was due to the predominance of the Radical tendency of the Republican party. The sustaining influence of such Ultra-Radical leaders as Zachariah Chandler, Austin Blair, Jacob M. and William A. Howard, successfully kept the Radical position practically typical of the Republican party, and more nearly identical with it, than was the case in most of the other states. Though a small number of influential men were really Conservative "bolters" from the Republican party, the lines remained so sharply drawn, that as a general truth it may be affirmed that the Republicans were the Radicals, and the Democrats the Conservatives. There was, then, no occasion—or at least no necessity—to change the old names.

CHAPTER III

THE POLITICS OF MICHIGAN, 1867-1868, AND HER ATTITUDE TOWARDS EARLY RECONSTRUCTION

THE year 1867 was indeed an important period in the politics of Michigan from the point of view of both state and federal legislation. As local interests were of greater importance in the spring elections of 1868, and federal issues in the fall campaign, the activities of the state legislature will first be considered.

STATE ISSUES

In the session which met January, 1867, the legislature ratified the Fourteenth Amendment, considered, but failed to pass, a number of bills relating to internal improvement, and provided for the revision of the state constitution. These three subjects will be treated seriatim.

When the proposed Fourteenth Amendment was submitted to the several states for their ratification in June of 1866, there were some persons in Michigan who favored calling an extra session of the legislature for this purpose. This elicited vigorous opposition on the part of the Democracy and of some Republicans who felt that the vote of a legislature, elected almost a year and a half before, could not possibly be considered a true expression of the present view of the constituency. "Action upon the amendment properly belongs to a legislature chosen upon the particular issue", declared a Republican journal, "for an extra session of this legislature might adopt the amendment against the convictions of the majority of its constituents, thus giving it a legal but not a moral force."¹

¹ *Jackson Daily Cit.*, July 3, 1866.

The discussion of the amendment continued throughout the summer and the following autumn, but not until the regular session of 1867 was it finally ratified. The great preponderance of Republican influence in the legislature rendered the opposition throughout the state altogether ineffectual. The Democrats regarded the amendment, if finally adopted, as "the commencement of a revolution in American affairs". "The construction of the Union was effected by willing compromises", a very able Democratic editor declared, and

the various independent and sovereign states resigned severally those portions of their sovereign power which were deemed necessary to the purposes of the Federal Government, reserving all other portions as inviolable. . . . The theory on which amendments are *now* proposed is that by having entered into the Union under the Constitution a power has been given to the General Government to possess itself of the reserved powers of the states, and that if two-thirds of Congress vote aye, and three-fourths of the states vote with them, they may annihilate the last relic of power in any state.¹

Contrary to the hopes of the Democracy, the elections of 1866 resulted in a stronger Republican majority in the new legislature that was the Union majority in the former body and ratification was not long delayed. It took place February 15th, and Michigan thus became one of the twenty-one states first ratifying.²

The second feature of the legislative activity of this session was the large number of railroad-aid bills presented in response to numerous petitions from the north, central

¹ Mr. Elihu B. Pond of Ann Arbor, in the *Argus*, Jan. 4, 1867. A similar view was expressed in the speech of Mr. O. C. Comstock in Jackson, Jan. 22, vol. iii, Pol. Pamphlets, *Jenison Coll.*

² The Senate ratified by a vote of 25 to 1, the House, 77 to 15. *Acts*, 1867, Joint Res., no. 12, pp. 312-14, Feb. 15; McPherson, *Handbook*, 1867, p. 68.

and western portions of the state. These bills authorized townships, cities and counties to vote pecuniary aid to railroad corporations either by taxation or by loans. The bills were vetoed by the Governor on the ground that they were both unconstitutional and impolitic.¹ Only one of them was passed over the veto—that to legalize bonds already issued—and the controversy occasioned strong enmity between the executive and legislature.²

THE CONSTITUTION OF 1867

It was the revision of the constitution of 1850, however, about which the state politics of this and the succeeding year principally centered. The contest which was to end in what the Democrats considered a signal victory was occasioned by the first message of Governor Crapo to the legislature of 1865, in which he recommended the consideration of constitutional revision.³ The matter was taken up in

¹ The provisions of the constitution which in the opinion of the Governor were violated were sections 6, 8, and 9, Art. XIV: "The credit of the state shall not be granted to, or in aid of, any person, association or corporation." "The state shall not subscribe to or be interested in the stock of any company, association, or corporation," and "the state shall not be a party to, or interested in, any work of internal improvements." The constitution is contained in the *Mich. Man.*, 1867. *Michigan as a Province, Territory, and State*, vol. iv, ch. I, pp. 52-3.

² *Acts*, 1867, p. 107; *Ann. Cyc.*, 1867. For accounts of this matter, and the attitude of different organs toward the railroad question, the following numbers are valuable: *Post*, Aug. 16, 27, Sept. 13, Nov. 5, 1867; *Free Press*, Aug. 24, 26; *Adv. and Trib.*, Aug. 31. This subject will be more fully examined subsequently, *cf. infra*, p. 81.

³ "At the general election to be held in the year 1866 and in each succeeding sixteenth year thereafter, and also at such other times as the legislature may by law provide, the question of a general revision of the constitution shall be submitted to the electors qualified to vote for members of the legislature, and in case a majority voting at such election shall decide in favor of a convention for such purpose, the legislature at the next session shall provide by law for the election of delegates to such convention." Sec. 2, Art. XX, *Mich. Man.*, 1867, pp. 136-8; for manner of submission, *ibid.*, 1871, pp. 399-400.

the succeeding legislature, that of 1867, and the composition of the constitutional convention was the subject of extended debate. The act which was finally passed March 11th provided in detail for the convention, and allowed each county as many delegates as it had State Representatives.¹ The body accordingly assumed practically the same character as the House, and as its membership included seventy-five Republicans and twenty-five Democrats, it could fairly be considered a Republican convention. It sat seventy-four days, from May 15th to August 22nd. Among the subjects urged upon its attention were woman suffrage, the union of the State Agricultural College with the State University, the prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquors, the increase of salaries of state officers, annual in place of biennial sessions of the legislature, negro suffrage, and aid to railways.

The first subject, woman suffrage, came before the convention twice in the form of a resolution for separate submission, and was defeated both times—the latter by a close vote.²

The point which caused the controversy concerning the compulsory support of the Agricultural College was the apparent partiality shown by the state toward one class of citizens. There was strong pressure brought to bear in favor of combining the institution with the State University and it was also proposed to convert it into a Women's College. Neither suggestion was carried out, for a provision was adopted which made its support compulsory as a separate institution "for the study of agriculture and the natural sciences connected therewith."³

¹ *Acts*, 1867, no. 41, 60-62.

² The vote was 31 to 34 against it. *Convention Debates*, vol. ii, July 26, p. 367; Aug. 12, pp. 766, 789-91.

³ *Debates*, vol. ii, p. 483.

The prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquors received thorough discussion in which the argument of inefficacy was brought forward by a strong faction favoring a rigid license system. The Committee on Intoxicating Liquors presented a resolution that "the legislature shall not pass any act authorizing the granting of a license for the sale of ardent spirits or intoxicating liquors as a beverage." A substitute was presented by Mr. Lothrop which included this prohibitory resolution and, in addition, a provision for a separate vote upon the article. The substitute was adopted by a vote of 45 to 36 and it was thus decided that prohibition should be excluded from the constitution in order that it might not impair the adoption of the latter.¹

With reference to the question of an increase of salaries, there was a general conviction that the remuneration of the state officials was insufficient to secure the best class of incumbents. The salary of the Governor was to be raised from \$1,000 to \$3,000, and those of the other officers were to be materially increased. The resolution to this effect was passed and the subject was included within the constitution as Section 1 of Article X.²

The advocates of annual legislative sessions declared that the growing interests of the state demanded more frequent

¹ *Debates*, vol. i, p. 596; vol. ii, pp. 679 *et seq.*; *Journal of the Convention*, pp. 640-4.

² *Debates*, pp. 609 *et seq.*: The existing and proposed salaries were as follows:

The Governor, \$1000, \$3000.

Secretary of State, \$800, \$2000.

Secretary of Treasury, \$1000, \$2500.

Commissioner of State Land Office, \$1000, \$2000.

State Superintendent of Instruction, \$1000, \$2500.

Auditor General, \$1000, \$2500.

Attorney General, \$800, \$2000.

Justices of the Supreme Court and of the Circuit Courts, \$2500 and \$1500 respectively, \$3000.

consideration. They also argued that if the legislature should meet annually, the hasty procedure which was generally admitted under the present system would thus be unnecessary, and greater consideration would be given the subjects of legislation. The sessions would be shortened, and the expense would not be materially increased. This faction of the convention was successful in getting an article adopted which provided for annual sessions, but this was to be submitted independently of the constitution, and to receive a separate ballot.¹

The subject of negro suffrage was formally brought before the convention on May 21st, the fifth day of its session. A resolution was presented by Mr. Lovell which requested that "the Committee on Elections be instructed to inquire into the propriety of extending the privileges of the elective franchise to all citizens over twenty-one years of age who have not been convicted of crime."² Following closely this phraseology of Mr. Lovell's, a resolution was accordingly reported by the Committee which simply omitted the word "white" from the qualifications for voting. In the protracted debate which followed, Mr. Thomas M. Crocker, of Macomb County, was prominent as a leading opponent of those who defended this summary manner of disposing of so important a subject by the convention. His plan was embodied in a resolution whose first part consisted of five articles, and whose second provided for the submission of the resolution to a separate vote.³

According to Mr. Crocker's plan, all persons should be considered electors, entitled to vote, who were twenty-one years of age and belonged to any one of five classes which were then enumerated. The first provided for "every white

¹ *Debates*, vol. ii, pp. 34-5.

² *Journal*, p. 44; *Debates*, vol. i, p. 47.

³ *Journal*, pp. 702-5; *Debates*, vol. ii, p. 779.

male citizen of the United States." The three succeeding articles respectively related to white male inhabitants intending to become citizens of the United States, to white male residents in the State on June 24, 1835, the date of the admission of Michigan into the Union, and to civilized male Indians with certain restrictions. The fifth and last article included "every male inhabitant of African descent, a native of the United States."

It was obvious that in this resolution the bestowal of the right of suffrage upon persons of African descent was considered in the light of a concession. After excluding blacks in the first three articles, the right was affirmatively conceded in the fifth. A further evidence that it was not intended to force the change upon the state was the provision for the submission of the resolution on impartial suffrage to a separate vote of the constituency. Thus the plan of Mr. Crocker certainly placed the matter before the people with greater clarity and impartiality than the summary resolution of the committee.

The conflicting views appeared in a brisk struggle over this question in which Messrs. Conger, Crocker and Morton participated.¹ The first, Omar D. Conger of St. Clair County, insisted that impartial suffrage should be established by the mere omission of the word "white" from the qualification for voters. The second, a man who represented a more conservative class, favored the clear distinction of voters with respect to color by enumerating the two classes in separate clauses. He defended his separate-submission clause as showing only a due regard for the views of the people on the question. The third member, Mr. Edward G. Morton of Monroe County, was opposed to negro suffrage on any grounds at present.

In the defense of his resolution, Mr. Crocker declared

¹ *Debates*, vol. ii, pp. 712-18, 786-9.

that the change in the electorate anticipated by the resolution of the committee was of such a nature that it should be put frankly before the constituency to accept or reject. Merely to strike out the word "white" from the present clause would not, he insisted, present clearly to the voters the full meaning of the proposed change. Mr. Morton, a Democrat, insisted that "it was wrong to adopt negro suffrage as a party measure merely to force it upon the Southern States." "Though I have always been a Free-Soil and Anti-Slavery man and believed slavery degrading in its effects," he declared,

I cannot now pay the institution such a high compliment as to say it has elevated and educated the recent slaves for the intelligent discharge of the right of suffrage and the maintenance of good government. I cannot thus unwittingly honor a barbarous institution, even though it may have elevated the negro to some extent above the same race in Africa.

The Democrats had but one-fourth of the membership of the convention, however, and after all, the original resolution of the Committee was adopted in which the word "white" was omitted from the qualifications for the elective franchise. The resolution for separate submission was rejected by a vote of 16 to 50. Thus the more radical element of the Republican party succeeded.¹

The Republicans usually defended the suffrage article by pointing to the small negro population in Michigan, which they said was 6,799. Of these it was thought that 971 would number the negro vote. This was entirely too low an estimate, as the state census report for 1864 gave the negro population as 8,244, and of this some Republicans themselves, placed the vote at 5,000.²

¹ *Journal*, pp. 767-8; *Debates*, vol. ii, pp. 789, 899, 1007. This provision was to become Section 1, Art. III, of the new Constitution.

² *Pamphlet of the Rep. State Central Committee; Adv. and Tribune*, Mar. 24.

The railroad-aid provisions of the new constitution were the natural outcome of the controversy between the executive and the legislature during the session immediately preceding the Convention.¹ Governor Crapo, it has been said, had refused to sign a number of aid bills during the session of 1867 on the ground that they were unconstitutional. In order to accomplish their aim, the railroad-aid advocates took the next step, which was obviously amendment or revision, and as the people had voted in favor of the latter, the convention did thorough work. There was certainly an economic and social need for railways in the interior and northern portions of the state, as the development of industry was handicapped by the inadequate facilities for transportation. On the other hand, the distrust of corporations which was strong and general, and the lack of interest in the southern counties already possessing satisfactory advantages combined to put the suggested changes into disfavor. Public aid by taxation to railroads owned and operated by corporations, was considered too dangerous a policy to be countenanced. As the article was finally adopted, the legislature was authorized to empower any city or township to raise by tax in aid of any railroad an amount not exceeding 10 per cent of its assessed valuation, upon the approval of a majority of the electors. No county could be authorized to pledge its credit in aid of a railroad save those of the Upper Peninsula.²

When the work of the convention was completed, the provisions touching suffrage, salaries and railroad aid were included in the final draft of the revised constitution. The prohibition of the sale of intoxicating liquors was em-

¹ Cf. *supra*, p. 75.

² Art. V of the Constitution.

Journal, pp. 643-4; *Debates*, vol. ii; *Mich. as a State*, vol. iv, pp. 29-36; pp. 121, 137, 198, 688, 925.

bodied in an article that was to be voted upon separately. If a majority of electors voted favorably, it was to be included in the constitution, otherwise it would be null. Similarly the provision for annual in place of biennial sessions of the legislature was formulated as an article for separate submission. It was with the constitution and these independent articles that the state politicians were occupied during the autumn and winter of 1867 and 1868. The fate of the constitution, which assumed a distinctly partisan character, was to determine the party status for the time on the most important current issues. The Republicans termed their opponents the "anti-negro, anti-prohibition, anti-salary, and anti-railroad" party, while the Democrats asserted that in the convention every member had endeavored to leave his mark, "relying upon the negro to carry him safely through all absurdities."¹ The draft was certainly more radical than it would have been, had the convention not closed before the results in the October states became known. Negro suffrage would, in all probability, have been made a third separate article in accordance with the advice of the Democratic minority. There was some reason for the assertion that the document was practically a party platform, rather than a constitution which could command the reasonable support of both parties.²

GENERAL ISSUES

The second great factor in the politics of Michigan—and this was common to the other states—was the Congressional legislation beginning early in the year 1867. In this session Congress entered upon radical reconstruction with popular approval, established a military government in the South, and commenced the task of creating a new electorate

¹ *Argus*, Mar. 13.

² "Nineteen reasons why the constitution should be rejected," *Argus*, Mar. 27, 1867.

there. The policy of restoring statehood on the basis of the old electorate was considered a failure, and in the formulation of the new policy the Senators from Michigan were among the most conspicuous figures. Mr. Howard had much more to do in formulating the general plan of Congress than did Mr. Chandler; for the latter devoted his first interest to his duties as chairman of the committee on rivers and harbors and rarely addressed the Senate at length upon a question of policy other than of a fiscal nature.

When the first step towards a positive assertion of the power to regulate suffrage was made by Congress in January, 1867, and negro suffrage was granted in the District of Columbia, a storm of reproach naturally followed from the Democracy of Michigan. They considered it inadvisable at this particular time to aggravate race antagonism in any way; moreover, the act as passed, they said, violated the preference of a large majority of Northern people. Michigan could not then officially declare her attitude upon the question of impartial suffrage, as the constitution containing the provision would not come before the people for ratification until the following spring. However, the Democrats of the state repeatedly took occasion to observe that the Republicans had radically changed their position since the preceding June, when in connection with the Fourteenth Amendment they declared that federal regulation of suffrage was not a feature of their policy. It was generally believed by the minority in Michigan that the act granting negro suffrage in the District of Columbia—though legally unassailable in itself—was but the “entering wedge for later forcing it upon all the States.” In the second place, it was asked how Congressmen from states denying negroes the right of suffrage could, with consistency, force it upon the people of the District. The prevailing interpretation given by the Conservative Republicans and Democrats to

the act from the first was the desire of the Radicals that the negro vote might give their party supremacy in the South.¹

The inevitable effect of the Reconstruction Acts of March and July which placed the South under military government and provided for the creation of a new electorate, was to increase the prejudice of the Democracy against the policy of Congress. On the other hand, the dominant party of the state was almost a unit in supporting Jacob M. Howard, its vigorous leader in the Senate.² There were, it is true, a few exceptions whose only effect was to excite hostile criticism on the part of the regular journals. "We candidly avow that we look with distrust upon the policy of some of the legislation now before Congress," admitted a Republican journalist. "We want more legislation for the people and less for Congress and party supremacy."³ However, the system of militarism and the federal guarantee of impartial suffrage had ceased to be odious to the great mass of Republicans,⁴ and the very few exceptions to this rule had no hearing which could gain them any influence.

The second branch of Congressional activity which preceded and influenced the politics and campaign of 1868 was, of course, the impeachment proceedings against President Johnson. When the subject was under consideration during the last session of the Thirty-ninth Congress, the Michigan delegation in the House was divided. The vote on

¹ *Jackson Cit.*, Jan. 9; *Free Press*, Jan. 10; *Argus*, Jan. 25, 1867.

² The debates of Senator Howard with Senators Hendricks, Henderson, Reverdy Johnson and Oliver P. Morton, showing his aggressive attitude at this time are to be found in the *Globe*, Jan. 11, 1867, p. 407 *et seq.*; Feb. 2, p. 968; Feb. 15, pp. 1365, 1371; Mar. 15, p. 112 *et seq.*; July 10, pp. 549-584.

³ *De Lano of the Saginaw Republican*, Feb. 6.

⁴ The above conclusion was gained from numbers of the *Daily Post*, *Lansing State Rep.*, and *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, February to July, 1867.

Mr. Ashley's Resolution of Impeachment taken January 7, 1867, showed five names in its favor, while one member refrained from voting.¹ On the seventh of the following December, Mr. Boutwell's resolution of impeachment received the favorable vote of but one Michigan Representative, and the opposition of four.² The great change in the attitude of the delegation was probably due to the inconclusive nature of the mass of testimony against the President which was submitted by the Committee on the Judiciary in pursuance of the Ashley resolution of the preceding January.

By February of the succeeding year (1868), however, the Michigan delegation in the House gave united support to the movement, and the vote on Mr. Covode's resolution, February 24th, reveals all six names among the yeas.³ The enthusiasm and conviction with which three members supported the resolution are evidenced by the addresses prepared by them on the subject. Mr. Beaman declared the action of the President in removing Secretary Stanton and appointing General Thomas Secretary of War *ad interim* unconstitutional. His basis for this conclusion was the power of appointment jointly vested in the President and the Senate. In the second place, he considered the action not only unconstitutional, but corrupt and criminal—a charge which would justify impeachment of the President for "high crimes and misdemeanors."⁴

Austin Blair put forward more extreme views, and arrived at an astonishing conclusion concerning the relative

¹ *McPherson*, 1867, p. 187-8. Messrs. Beaman, Driggs, Ferry, Trowbridge and Upson voted yea, while Blair did not express himself.

² *Globe*, Dec. 7, 1867, p. 68; *McPherson*, 1867, p. 264-5. Beaman, Driggs, Ferry and Upson voted nay, Trowbridge voted yea, while Blair, again, did not express himself. *Post*, Dec. 9.

³ *Globe*, Feb. 24, 1868, p. 1400; *McPherson*, 1868, p. 20.

⁴ *Globe*, Feb. 22, pp. 176-7; *Adv. and Trib.*, Feb. 24.

rights of the President and Congress. "The President of the United States is the servant of the people of the United States," he asserted, "and because he is the servant of the people, he is the servant of Congress, for the time being, which represents the people, and he must obey the law." Blair urged the successful carrying out of impeachment "in the name of peace and public quiet", and threw all censure for the necessity of instituting these proceedings upon the President.¹ In the choice of managers, Messrs. Blair and Upson each received one vote only, and none of the Michigan members appeared as managers of the trial. They thus had no direct part in the proceedings.²

The Senators from Michigan were known to be warmly in favor of impeachment from the first, and in various interviews and communications they declared their sympathy with Stanton for refusing to resign "on grounds of grave public considerations."³ Mr. Howard was appointed by the President of the Senate to the select committee of seven to consider and report upon the House Resolution of Impeachment. It was in this capacity that Mr. Howard exercised a great influence in the formulation of the rules of procedure for the impeachment trial. On February 26th he presented the report embodying the work of the Committee, which was under discussion from February 29th and was finally adopted the night of March 2nd.⁴

The activity of Howard in the preparation of the Rules of Procedure had so broken his health that when the vote came to be taken on May 12th, Chandler moved adjourn-

¹ *Globe*, Feb. 22, pp. 1367-8. Mr. Driggs expressed similar views in his speech which followed; *ibid.*, pp. 1368-9.

² *Globe*, Mar. 2, 1868, pp. 16, 19.

³ *Post*, Aug. 9, 1867; *Adv. and Trib.*, Aug. 14.

⁴ *Globe*, Feb. 26, p. 1431; Feb. 29, pp. 1515, 1523-4, 1532-3, 1577; Mar. 2, 1586, 1603.

ment until the 16th in order that his colleague might be present. On the latter day the vote on Article XI was taken, and both senators voted "guilty". This article declared that the President had intentionally violated the Tenure-of-Office Act of March 2, 1867, and had attempted to defeat the execution of the Reconstruction Act of the same date.¹ On the 26th, Articles II and III were voted upon and both names were again among the thirty-five who voted guilty.²

Among the twenty-nine Senators who filed opinions on the case was Jacob M. Howard, and his was a strong proof of his legal training and experience. He held the Tenure-of-Office Act "fully warranted by the Constitution", and he considered that Secretary Stanton came under its provisions. "There can be but one conclusion," he said, "he [President Johnson] incurred the guilt . . . whether the article [Art. XI] be regarded as founded directly upon the statute or charging a common law misdemeanor of attempting to commit a statutory offence." Howard emphasized the point that as appointment requires a concurrence of two agencies removal must have the same.³

Throughout the impeachment discussion and trial, the Democrats accused Congress of "attempting to annihilate

¹ Dunning, *Essays on the Civil War and Reconstruction*, pp. 272-4. *Globe*, Supplement, pp. 410-12; *Trib. Alm.*, 1869, pp. 25, 26. The former act denied the President the power of removal, even during the recess of the Senate, which body must concur in every suspension by the President to make it legal and effective. The second act established military government throughout the ten Southern states by dividing them into five military districts, each to be under the command of an officer of no lower rank than a brigadier-general.

² *McPherson*, 1868, p. 282. The charges included in Arts. II and III were the violation of the Tenure-of-Office Act by the removal of the Secretary of War and the appointment of General Thomas without the advice and consent of the Senate.

³ *Globe*, Supplement, pp. 500-6.

the President," and the failure to convict was naturally the source for much rejoicing. They expressed the hope that Congress "might now see fit to recede to its normal position under the Constitution."¹

On the other hand, the dominant party in Michigan responded enthusiastically to the forward steps of the leaders of impeachment, but in some cases there was a measure of displeasure at the violent methods employed to force the conviction of the President. The failure of the undertaking was a source of regret to the Republicans, and to a few members of the party the conduct of the leaders at the close of the trial was still more regretted. One organ urged the Republicans "not to be discouraged by its failure as it had not reflected any injury upon the party," and then proceeded to lecture the organization upon its attempt to force conviction. It strongly denounced the methods employed by the enthusiasts: "We cannot forbear to express our disapproval of the means sought to compel the Senate to find the respondent guilty, without regard to evidence. . . . The attempt to coerce certain Senators to pronounce the accused guilty, whether they believe him so or not, is a sad spectacle, and must annihilate the party whom the actors represent." The fierce denunciation of Republican members of the court who could not conscientiously pronounce the President guilty, was declared an "unseemly, ungenerous, and uncalled-for wrong."²

It cannot be a great error to consider the large majority of Republicans in the state as willing followers of their extreme leaders in Washington with respect to the impeachment proceedings. In this matter, as in others previously noted, the dominant party of the state was visibly led by its ultra-radical members in Congress and the Democracy was powerless to check this tendency toward extremes.³

¹ *Free Press*, May 30, 1868.

² *Jackson Cit.*, May 19.

³ *Post*, Feb. 24, May 6, 1868; *Adv. and Trib.*, May 27.

Such were the subjects of political discussion, state and federal, which preceded the campaign of 1868. Of the former, the new constitution was the greatest issue, and of the latter, the Reconstruction Acts of 1867 and the unsuccessful attempt at impeachment were of the most far-reaching influence. As the two lines of interest were interrelated in the early part of the campaign, they must, to a certain degree, be treated together.

THE SPRING CAMPAIGN OF 1868

The spring elections were considered of equal importance with the fall. "Let us go into the spring campaign on local issues—the most important of which is the defeat of the new constitution—and let the national issues wait the tide of events."¹ Such was the feeling in the early part of the year 1868.

The Republican state convention for the year was held early enough to make declarations upon the constitution before the spring elections should occur, and thus the autumn campaign was opened before that of the spring had closed. By the 21st of February the call was issued for the convention to meet on the 18th of the next month. This call invited the "co-operation and participation of all friends of an economical administration of the public expenditure, the speedy reorganization of those states whose governments were destroyed by the rebellion, and the restoration of their proper relations with the United States."² This invitation seemed to have particular significance in the light of the Act of Congress of March 11th, which authorized the ratification of the constitutions of the states applying for readmission by a majority of persons voting, in

¹ *Argus*, Feb. 7, 1868.

² *Adv. and Trib.*, Feb. 19, 1868. The call was commented upon with insinuations by the Democratic press. *Argus*, Feb. 21; *Free Press*, Feb. 25.

place of the previous requirement of a majority of the registered voters. This act also authorized the voting for state officers and Congressmen at the same election. It thus marked a change in the policy of Congress from critical deliberation to readier action.

In the state Republican convention General Grant was recommended for President, and Colfax for Vice-President.¹ The impeachment proceedings were approved, and impartial suffrage was demanded. The platform contained a strong plea for the adoption of the revised state constitution, and this resolution was the one to which the Republicans probably attached the greatest importance. It declared that "the Republicans of Michigan owe it to themselves, to the memory of the framers of the Declaration of Independence, and to the interests of free government everywhere, to secure by a triumphant majority the ratification of the proposed constitution, with its broad platform of equal and exact justice to all men, impartial suffrage and equality before the law." "This constitution," it continued, "is far better adapted to develop the resources of Michigan, and advance the real interests of the people than our present constitution."

As the Democrats held no convention before the spring elections, they did not have an equal opportunity to state their attitude officially upon the proposed draft, but there was no necessity, as the people rejected it by a majority of

¹ Following Austin Blair's speech in the Lower House of Congress recommending Grant's candidacy, Edward W. Barber, who was then Reading Clerk of the House,—now a resident of Jackson, and the editor of the *Patriot*,—sent a letter to a Michigan journal urging the nomination of Grant. Mr. Driggs of the Sixth District read the article and showed it to Mr. Washburne of Illinois. The latter approved it and immediately went up to the Clerk's desk and assured Mr. Barber that he was right. "If the Republicans don't nominate Grant," he said, "the Democrats will."

38,853 when they came to express themselves April 6th.¹ Prohibition and annual sessions were emphatically voted down by those who voted upon those issues. Almost 25,000 who voted upon the constitution neglected to express themselves upon prohibition, yet from the comparatively small anti-prohibition majority it appears that this issue was stronger than the constitution itself, and would probably have helped it at the polls rather than have caused its defeat. The southern and south-central counties with their Democratic leaning naturally manifested the greatest disapproval. In twenty of these, which presented a Radical majority of 15,000 in 1866, the returns showed a majority of 25,000 in opposition to the constitution.²

A comparison of the vote on the adoption of the constitution with that on Governor seven months later reveals the fact that over 43,000 voters declined to express themselves upon the former. This indicates either an indifference or an unwillingness of Republicans to approve the work of the convention. Rather than vote against it, they preferred not to vote at all, as the document was in reality a partisan affair made evident by the strict party vote upon the question of its adoption. The strong Republican counties of the northwest—among them Antrim, Leelanaw, Grand Traverse, Manistee and Oceana—returned large majorities in its favor. The issue in the southern and south-central counties is less evident, as the tendencies of this group were

¹ *Mich. Man.*, 1869, p. 246; *Trib. Alm.*, p. 73; *World Alm.*; *Ann. Cyc.*; McPherson, 1868, p. 353; *Mich. as a State*, vol. iv, ch. i. The vote on the constitution stood 71,729 to 110,582. On prohibition, the affirmative votes numbered 72,462, negatives, 86,143, and the proposed annual sessions were defeated by a majority of almost 76,000. *The Nation*, Apr. 23, 1868, p. 322.

² *Free Press*, Apr. 8; *Argus*, Apr. 10; containing editorial comment from the Democratic point of view; *Adv. and Trib.*, Apr. 8; *Lansing State Rep.*, Apr. 10, presenting Republican reflections upon the outcome of the election.

Democratic, and from year to year they often changed allegiance. At the same time it was to be expected that the south portion of the state would possess the largest proportion of negro population. These counties returned an average negative vote of 60 per cent to 80 per cent, and among this group were the ten counties with one per cent or over of colored population. Whether the rejection of the proposed constitution was due, then, to partisan feeling, aversion to the negro, or opposition to railroad aid, it is impossible to decide.¹

THE AUTUMN CAMPAIGN OF 1868

The autumn campaign had already begun with the Republican state convention which had met early in 1868, and vainly urged the adoption of the new constitution.² The campaign program was naturally a eulogy of the party and ticket, and a bitter invective against the Democrats and their anti-war declaration of 1864. In strange inconsistency with their invitation issued for the convention, the Republicans declared against speedy restoration and amnesty.³ One of the most widely-circulated campaign tracts was the speech of Austin Blair,⁴ which appears in the *Congressional Globe* for July 13th. In this address, dealing with the "Issues of the Campaign", he quoted passages from notable Democratic speeches, and charged the party with disloyalty. He vigorously opposed amnesty and denounced the Green-

¹ The *World Almanac* for 1869 strangely lists the votes upon the constitution as if they were cast exclusively upon the question of negro suffrage. This was certainly the most important issue in the proposed constitution, but cannot be considered identical with it. Precisely what proportion of the negative votes were cast purposely against the suffrage provision, it is impossible to ascertain.

² Cf. *supra*, pp. 89, 90.

³ *Post*, Apr. 22; *Lansing State Rep.*, May 13, 1868.

⁴ Blair's speech, which presented the Republican point of view in a typical fashion, may be found in the *Globe*, *Appx.*, pp. 414-18; *Pol. Pamphlets*, vol. i, *Jenison Coll.*

back policy with which the Democracy had become identified. He declared that "but for the unparalleled treachery of Johnson, reconstruction would have been completed long since," and he closed with a eulogy of Grant and Colfax. Upon the choice for President there seemed entire agreement in the state. All the delegates to the national convention cast their votes for Grant from the first to the last ballot. The state ticket was headed by Henry P. Baldwin for Governor, a milder partisan than his two predecessors had been, and the other names were not among the most prominent Republicans of the state.¹

Turning now to the consideration of the Democracy, we find that there was an inclination on the part of some of the members to favor the early date of March 4th for the state convention. Others urged the same objections which appeared two years before against premature state resolutions. They declared that "the true policy for a minority party is to wait for its opponents to make their platform . . . in order that it may act understandingly and attack vulnerable points." Besides, a campaign of three months was preferable to one of eight, for the latter would be too tiresome for the candidates, and financially too destructive without corresponding gains. A call was finally issued for the convention to meet in Detroit, May 27th. The platform declared that

the difference between American Democracy and Federacy is as radical and as eternal as the laws of the mind, and as long as men segregate by affinity into political organizations, so long the Democratic policy will, and the Republican will not, harmonize with our form of government; and the adherents of the latter can never establish such harmony until they change their natures or the form of our government. The

¹ *Ann. Cyc.*, p. 500; *Adv. and Trib.*, Mar. 19; *Lansing State Rep.*, Mar. 20.

first is impossible, the last is revolution. . . . Revolution is the logical tendency and (if not resisted) the necessary result of Republicanism to which its leaders consciously, and the people unconsciously, are rapidly advancing.¹

The platform contained a long rehearsal of the features of Republican absolutism, and condemned emphatically the tendencies toward centralization. It was "the firm, united purpose" of the Democracy "to restore the union of the states, keep the federal government and each of its departments within its proper sphere, and cause it to respect the reserved rights of the states and the people." It demanded the abolition of all bank and tariff monopolies, the Freedmen's Bureau, and all standing armies in time of peace. Extravagance and corruption must be checked and economy practiced. One of the most significant provisions was in part well disguised by the phraseology—that of leniency toward the rebels. "All men should be held innocent until proven guilty, crime should be punished according to law, and equal justice be done to all men, irrespective of color or race." The aim of the Democracy was declared to be "to keep this country as our fathers made it, a white man's government." Immigration, it was demanded, should be encouraged and the public domain retained for the people rather than given up to speculating corporations.

The platform declared for the "preservation of the public credit," and the taxation of government bonds. It promised that the party, if successful, would see that "all public debts shall be honorably paid," and that "the bonds of the federal government issued after the greenbacks were made legal tender shall be paid in the currency of the country except where otherwise expressly provided by law or stipulated in the bond." This evidence of a willingness to countenance the greenback movement was sufficient to fasten upon

¹ *Ann. Cyc.*, p. 494; *Free Press*, May 28, June 2; *Argus*, May 29.

the Democracy more than the Republican party the reproach and disadvantage of soft-money sympathies. The Republicans declared that this plank favored "the twin-brother of repudiation—the payment of the bonds in greenbacks."

The currency issue was more important from the point of view of the Democracy than of the Republicans. It was, however, very prominent in the campaign speeches of both parties, and the demand for the payment of the government debt—especially of the five-twenties—in greenbacks in preference to gold, naturally placed the former organization in the position of a soft-money party. Its members were accused of demanding the issue of an immense additional volume of greenbacks which would be followed by the depreciation of the currency.¹ Their creed with reference to this issue was thus set forth by them:

The Democrats have always advocated hard money in preference to soft, and opposed the old National Bank with its note issue. It opposed the Legal Tender Act of 1862, and pronounced it unconstitutional especially in the case of contracts made prior to its passage. The party favors the earliest possible withdrawal of the greenback currency and return to specie payments, but it believes that as long as greenbacks are to remain currency of the country and a legal tender, they should be kept in circulation and general use.²

The Democrats were persistent in their protest against being considered repudiators and inflationists, for "the payment of obligations in greenbacks where gold is not promised is not repudiation." They did not intend, it was declared, to increase paper to the amount of the bonds in question, but they expected by rigid economy in administration to pay the

¹ Speech of Chandler in Battle Creek, Aug. 24, *Battle Creek Journal*, Aug. 26. The speech of Charles L. May in Ann Arbor, Sept. 21, *Argus*, Sept. 25.

² *Argus*, Aug. 21; also Oct. 2, "Facts about money."

debt out of the surplus revenue in greenbacks or at a greenback standard. If payments in gold were exacted, immense premiums would necessarily be paid, as there never was at one time over \$250,000,000 in gold coin, and this would be entirely inadequate. With the greenback policy, the taxpayer would be saved the premium, and the government need only keep its legal tenders moving, by paying them out in bonds and receiving them for taxes to pay its debt. Such were the arguments of the Democratic party, and the financial evils of a Radical victory were vividly outlined.¹

In the national democratic convention, Michigan was represented by well-known Union Democrats, some of whom worked with the Johnson party in 1866.² Before the convention, the preference of Michigan for the presidency was not definite, and Pendleton, Reverdy Johnson, Hendricks and Seymour all had followers. On the first four ballots, Michigan voted for Johnson, and from that to the twenty-first, the delegates cast their votes for Hendricks. When the twenty-second ballot was being taken, Mr. Stuart made a short speech in which he declared that Michigan's sole hope was to nominate a candidate whose election was certain. The votes were then cast in favor of Seymour.³

¹ "The payment of the debt in gold will cause \$7,000,000,000 of added debt—which will be fastened upon the country as a permanent institution, and every fifteen years the interest alone will amount to the principal. Money will become scarce as bondholders will desire to have greenbacks called in, in order that they can receive their pay in gold. Prices will fall, employment will be more poorly remunerated, and taxes will be higher and the times harder for all but the bankers and the bond-holders." *Argus*, Oct. 23.

² Five delegates at large and two alternates were appointed to the national convention. Michigan was represented on the committee of credentials by Byron G. Stout, on the committee of organization by Charles E. Stuart, and on the committee on resolutions by John Moore. The first was one who supported Johnson two years before.

³ *Official Proceedings of the Nat. Dem. Conv.*, 1868; *Free Press*, July 7, 9; *Argus*, July 10, 17.

The state Democratic convention of July 15th was held to nominate state officers and presidential electors. It pledged its support to the Detroit and New York platforms, and denounced the extravagances in the state administration. This resolution was directed against the expensive improvement policies, the practice of appointing commissions to carry out the same, and the railroad-aid legislation which had remained a leading state issue after the failure of the proposed constitution. The fear that the favorite schemes of the Republicans rejected with the constitution might be brought forward gave grounds for the declaration against the "attempted changes in the organic law," extravagance and negro suffrage, and the interference in municipal affairs with reference to the taxation of cities and towns for corporation aid.¹

THE ELECTION OF 1868

The spring elections and the vote upon the constitution had made the Radicals less certain of success than usual. Doubtful counties of the south and central portions were showing an increased allegiance to the Democrats, and campaign arrangements were focused upon the lower three Congressional Districts.² The arrangements of the Republicans for their campaign were very detailed and effective. Speakers of note were engaged for addresses, and among them were Colfax and Wade.³

The results of the election revealed a slight gain in the

¹ For the convention of July 15, *Free Press*, July 15, 16. Comment in the *New York World*, July 24, T. L., vol. lxxviii p. 206, col. 4.

² Chandler himself was not so confident as usual. On August 27 he wrote from Detroit to his colleague, Sen. Howard, in Washington: "the Copperheads are at work in earnest, and have some hopes of carrying at least two or three Congressional Districts. I think you should come here at the earliest possible moment." *Howard MSS.*

³ *Post*, Sept. 9; *Jackson Cit.*, Oct. 27; *Lansing State Rep.*, Nov. 3.

Republican following since the last presidential campaign. Lincoln received 55.89 per cent of the popular vote, whereas Grant was given 56.98 per cent.¹ The gubernatorial vote was remarkably similar to the presidential, the latter being only 300 larger than the former. In 1866, the Republicans polled 58.83 per cent of the total vote for governor, at this election, only 56.8 per cent. Apparently there was a contrary tendency within the state to that of the federal ticket, and this was due undoubtedly to the personality of Grant. The six Congressmen elected were all Republicans. In the sixth district Strickland was elected, who two years later was to lead the opposition in the name of reform against Driggs, his predecessor in the House. The joint majority of the dominant party in the state legislature was reduced from 94 in 1866 to 66. There were 27 Republicans and 5 Democrats in the Senate, while the proportion in the House was 72 to 28.²

Apparently neither party made startling inroads upon the reliable territory of the other and it was merely the customary shifting of allegiance with small majorities in the more evenly balanced counties that determined the results of 1868. Two of the northern counties, Keweenaw and Ontonagon, changed from Republican to Democratic by a small margin, and five of seven counties of the northern peninsula were thus Democratic. Emmet and Cheboygan regularly followed their neighbors on the north. In the three southern tiers of counties, Livingston and Wayne remained Democratic by small majorities and Washtenaw made its third successive change, giving its majority to the Democracy.

¹ Grant received 128,550, Seymour, 97,069, the Republican majority thus approximating 31,000. In the gubernatorial contest, Baldwin received 128,051, Moore, 97,290. *Mich. Man.*, 1869, pp. 229-30, 235-2; *Mich. Alm.*, 1869, pp. 34-44.

² *Mich. Man.*, 1869, pp. 231-3; *Trib. Alm.*, p. 73.

The elections of 1866 and 1868 showed the Radical element supreme, but from this time forward its influence waned. In the former year the state showed its preference for radical reconstruction, and in 1868 it approved what had been done. In the two next years, however, a tide of reaction and reform would send one Democrat to Congress and alter considerably the balance in the state legislature. In 1872, the actual state of opposition was obscured by the political catastrophe which overwhelmed the Democracy of Michigan as that of other states. From that year, however, the Democratic party with its various allies was a growing power, and the Republicans were no longer absolute.

THE SENATORIAL CONTEST OF 1868-9, AND THE TRIUMPH
OF CHANDLER

The Senatorial campaign was notable as the conflict between two of the most prominent Republicans in Michigan, Ex-Governor Blair and Senator Chandler. They held very similar party principles at this time, but entirely conflicting ambitions. The former had aspired to a seat in the Senate since 1857, and was an avowed candidate in 1863 and 1865. On account of the strong following of each in the state, a compromise was planned by their mutual friends¹ in 1868. The attempted arrangement provided for the retirement of Austin Blair from the present contest with the assurance by Chandler that he would not give any support to any other candidate at the next election. Several of Blair's wisest supporters urged his acceptance of the plan, and this would certainly have been the prudent thing to do. When he visited the state, however, during the early part of the senatorial campaign, his

¹ James A. Walters of Kalamazoo, Fred Morley and George Jerome of Detroit.

more moderate advisers were unfortunately absent, and rash counsel persuaded the Ex-Governor to reject the arrangement and enter the contest for nomination against Chandler.¹

The opposition to Chandler was considered hopeful by the Democrats, who suggested the coalition of the anti-Chandlerites with the Democrats for the election of Ex-Governor Crapo to the Senate.² The name proposed was a poor one, considering the violent hostility that Crapo had always shown toward the Democracy. This suggestion was a forecast, however, of the actual event six years later. There were charges of bribery brought against Chandler from various sources, and the personal influence of Michigan residents in Washington was largely thrown against him.³ Stanton, who naturally supported him, wrote that "Chandler's re-election would be a vindication of the judgment of Congress, of Mr. Lincoln, and the conduct of the war."⁴

The Republican legislative caucus was held Wednesday evening, January 6, 1869, and the votes stood Chandler 78,

¹ *Mich. Coll.*, vol. xxxv; "Mich. Men in Congress," Edward W. Barber. Among the friends of Blair who regretted his continued rivalry with Chandler, was Amos Root, and he was absent at the time of Blair's visit to Michigan. Mr. Edward W. Barber related the above account in an interview which serves to amplify the mention of the affair given in the biographies of Mr. Blair. Mr. H. H. Bingham wrote to Howard, Nov. 17, 1868: "Several of Governor Blair's friends had a conference with him last night, and were of the opinion that he had better withdraw as a candidate for Senator this winter and wait for the next vacancy when he would be more likely to succeed. I am told this was finally agreed upon." *Howard MSS.* If this action was ever taken, it was rescinded.

² *Flint Dem.*, Dec. 7.

³ Some unfriendly discrimination had been manifested toward them at a social function of the Chandlers. *Argus*, Jan. 8, 1869.

⁴ Letter of Dec. 22, 1868; Comment in the *New York Herald*, Jan. 10, 1869, T. L., vol. lxxxii, p. 53, col. 4.

Thomas W. Ferry 3, Austin Blair 3, and 7 scattering on five other names.¹ It was stated by an observer who "went to Lansing in the interest of the anti-Chandlerites, that the doubtful votes or members were very soon disposed of by the unprecedented pressure of Chandler's lobby."² Another observer who was a loyal Chandlerite wrote to Howard that

the opposition to Mr. Chandler never had any strength. . . . This ends Blair's prospects in that direction forever, and his friends say he will not be brought forward again. Blair was on hand, but Ferry was more discreet and remained at home. On learning of the situation, his friends early withdrew his name. Blair's withdrawal was without terms or conditions of any kind, and so was Ferry's. This contest demonstrates the weakness of the locality argument more satisfactorily than ever. No one urged it or cared for it, but Mr. Chandler was renominated "because the Legislature thought he had done good service, and was the best man for the place." . . . They tried to influence some members of the Legislature against Chandler, by claiming that his nomination would prejudice your chance two years hence, but it was ridiculed on all sides as without any force.

The writer closed reassuringly: "You need have no fear of your success unless the Republican party is defeated on all sides."³

¹ Of these, Isaac P. Christiancy and William A. Howard each received one. Five Republicans were absent. *Argus*, Jan. 8, 1869; *Post and Tribune Life of Chandler*, p. 298.

² Letter of Allen Potter of Kalamazoo, Jan. 12, to Howard, who he "thought would be interested, having in view his own election two years hence." *Howard MSS.*

³ Letter of A. B. Maynard of Detroit, to Howard, Jan. 9, *Howard MSS.* He also had been in Lansing and closely observed the caucus preliminaries. As a friend of Howard, he was anxious to give him all information which would be helpful in 1871.

At the election of January 19th, Chandler was re-elected over Sanford M. Green, the Democratic candidate, by a vote of three-fourths of the legislature.¹ The Democratic candidate was a jurist of note throughout the state, and though he was not such a strong party favorite as the Democrats should have placed in opposition to Chandler, still their most prominent man would undoubtedly have lost to Chandler this year.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE CONTEST OF 1871

The election of 1871 was already in the mind of every politician, and Mr. Howard was being coached by his friends with a view to his renomination. One friend hinted at the importance of appointments throughout the state, and advised him to "hold close to Chandler." "The contest this fall," he assured Howard, "has accomplished one result in your favor. It has substantially united your friends and Chandler's."² He then alluded to the ineffectiveness of the locality argument with the legislature and the great majority of the Republican press, and assured him that "the Republicans will never refuse you two full terms in the Senate when they have given your colleague three."

The strength of the opposition to Howard was probably greater than his friends thought. There was little personal criticism and his activity throughout Reconstruction and his speeches on suffrage, amnesty and civil rights became campaign documents. Yet there was a desire for a vacancy in the Senate, which would allow a man from another sec-

¹ Chandler received 24 votes in the Senate, 70 in the House; Green, 4 votes in the Senate, 26 in the House, *Mich. Man.*, 1869, pp. 263-4; *Lansing State Rep.*, Jan. 20; *Post*, Jan. 21, 23; *Sen. Jour. and House Jour.*, 1869.

² Letter of A. B. Maynard, Jan. 14, 1869, *Howard MSS.*

tion to come forward, and this feeling was stronger than any personal hostility toward Howard. If his seat could be vacated by his promotion rather than his defeat, it would be entirely satisfactory. It was with this motive that the name of Jacob M. Howard was mentioned early in February for the Vice-Presidency, and Sumner's compliment was repeated—that he was the ablest man in the United States Senate.¹ The suggestion was not widely taken up, and the probabilities are that some safe though complimentary disposition of the Detroit Senator was desired by an up-state faction, who knew Chandler's strength and probability of re-election. In such a manner, some aspirant from another locality could be accommodated without waiting for so improbable an occurrence as Chandler's defeat. This desire to have central and northern Michigan represented in the Senate cannot be censured, though it appears from the *Globe* that Mr. Chandler was taking good care of the industrial and economic interests of the entire state.

A movement full of interest was started for Howard's appointment to a cabinet position. In November he was urged by several influential friends to avail himself of a place in the cabinet—the Secretaryship of the Interior being “probably preferred.”² The means to this end were well worked out by Justice Christiancy, a friend of Howard, who expected no gain and was undoubtedly sincere.³ He expressed a willingness to sign recommendations for Howard, contrary to the newly-adopted prac-

¹ This remark was made by Charles Sumner in an address at Lansing. The recommendation was given by the *Lansing State Rep.*, Feb. 3, and commented upon by the *Argus*, Feb. 5, 1868.

² S. D. Bingham to Howard, Nov. 28, 1868. Mr. Bingham was editor of the *Lansing State Rep.* Howard MSS.

³ Letter of Jan. 15, 1869, from Monroe, Howard MSS.

tice of the State Supreme Court. The method proposed in this letter was "to get a resolution through the Legislature to the effect that 'Michigan is entitled to a Cabinet office'—mentioning no names, and relying upon a petition with a long list of Republican signatures." There is probable evidence of Ex-Governor Blair's continued ambitions, in the care and thoroughness with which he canvassed signatures for the petition.¹

At this time it is evident that both Christiancy and Blair were on very friendly terms with Howard, whether or no there was a partisan motive for it. Christiancy expressed the hope that Howard would feel free to repose the deepest confidence in him concerning the political aspects of the latter's re-election, and it is not to be doubted that he was entirely honest in his friendly offices. There is no proof that Ex-Governor Blair was insincere at this time and he certainly was not hostile. In the light, however, of his avowed candidacy two years later and his well-known ambitions for the senatorship, it is only probable that he had hopes of succeeding to the vacancy. The opposition on ground of locality seemed auspicious for him. The schemes for Howard's promotion generally originated in the office of the influential Lansing *State Republican*, and a resident of Jackson would have reason to consider himself far enough removed from Detroit to satisfy the requirements of eligibility from the central west.

¹ Mr. J. M. Cravath informed Howard of the friendly offices of Ex-Governor Blair, who "would not permit his friends to do anything for him, but threw his influence actively in his (Howard's) favor.

CHAPTER IV

FORWARD MOVEMENT OF THE DEMOCRACY IN MICHIGAN

RATIFICATION AND INTERPRETATION OF THE FIFTEENTH AMENDMENT

THE years 1869 and 1870 saw the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment and the culmination of the suffrage agitation in Michigan by amendment of the state constitution. The railroad question which had received some previous attention—entirely non-partisan—became the strongest of local issues and affected the development of the conflict two years hence. Fiscal questions were prominent and received the consideration of both parties, but this was not yet the period of their greatest importance. A reform movement, though not strong, arose this year in connection with a Representative in Congress, and was to attain greater prominence within the next two years. This was obviously a period of the passing of former issues and the introduction of new.

The political field in the early part of 1869 was occupied by the suffrage discussion and the struggle over the ratification of the federal amendment. The Democrats opposed the consideration of the amendment by the legislature, and seized upon a point of order which they hoped would strengthen their plea of inexpediency and unconstitutionality. The state constitution provided that no new bill should be introduced into the legislature after the first fifty days of the session had expired, and as this period

had elapsed, it was urged that the ratification, if given, would be void.¹ It was said too, that the existing legislature could not properly take action upon this question; for that body had not been elected with reference to it, and was not therefore capable of expressing the will of the people, who had one year before rejected a constitution involving the same issue. These considerations were merely secondary to the fear of consolidation of power in the general government, and its encroachment upon the rights of the states in reference to suffrage. The House ratified by a vote of 68 to 24, four Republicans and as many Democrats being absent. The resolution was immediately sent to the Senate, where it was adopted without debate by a vote of 25 to 5, only two Republicans being absent.² The fact of ratification made it desirable—though not constitutionally necessary—for the state to grant negro suffrage in conformity to the federal precedent. Accordingly, an amendment to strike out the word “white” from the suffrage clause was passed by the legislature, to be submitted to the people for ratification at the fall election of the next year.³

In April of this year, 1869, occurred the election of

¹ Sec. 28, Art. IV. This objection was easily disposed of by the Speaker when he construed the fifty-day limit to apply only to bills and such resolutions as require the signature of the Governor in order to become laws. This joint resolution of ratification, he insisted, did not come within the classes enumerated by the constitution and could therefore be introduced. To justify this ruling, however, strict construction must be resorted to. Sec. 14, Art. XIV, did not provide for the submission of joint resolutions to the governor, and as the measure in question belonged to this class, the limit of time during which it might be introduced did not apply. This is based upon the understanding that the aim of Sec. 28, Art. IV, was to give the governor sufficient time for consideration and signature.

² *Acts*, 1869, vol. i, p. 391, Joint Res., no. 9; *Globe*, Mar. 26, 1869, p. 289.

³ *Acts*, 1869; *Mich. Man.*, 1869, pp. 298-303.

Justice of the State Supreme Court and of Regents of the University. This was not, however, indicative of the relative party status in Michigan for several reasons. At these elections of the odd years, when the party antecedents of the candidates are less important than their personality, and party gains are comparatively of little consequence, there is the maximum degree of abstention. Out of a voting population of probably 250,000, the votes cast for Justice of the Supreme Court at this election did not exceed 150,591.¹ Furthermore, the personal element is fortunately of far greater weight than in other elections, and the fact that the Republican candidates received on an average three-fifths of the entire vote cannot be said, in itself, to indicate any precise party tendency.

In the spring election of 1870 there were several novel features with regard to the electorate. Negroes exercised the right of suffrage throughout the state. Their right to do so was questioned, but it was defended by the Republicans on the ground that after the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment, it was unnecessary to wait for the adoption of the state amendment. Colored citizens were generally registered on Saturday, April 2nd, of this year, and regularly voted on the next Monday.² The last two amendments to the federal constitution were also claimed by a certain faction to enfranchise women. A strong movement for woman suffrage had been in progress for some time. It was not strange, then, that some advantage was taken of the extremely confused condition

¹ The *Mich. Man.* of 1875 gives a voting population of 268,756 for 1870, and 250,000 is certainly not an overestimate for that of 1869. Thomas M. Cooley received 90,705, and O. Darwin Hughes, 59,886. McPherson, 1869, p. 506; *Mich. Man.*, 1871. In the district judicial elections, six out of sixteen judges chosen were Democrats.

² In Ann Arbor there were 64, in Battle Creek, 200, and Ypsilanti, 52. *Jackson Cit.*, Apr. 4; *Argus*, Apr. 8.

of suffrage ideas; for it was evident that the precise effect of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments was not clear in the minds of many. Two instances of women voting were reported at the time,¹ and it was expected by many that by the next election they would be positively enfranchised.

THE RAILROAD AID ISSUE

In the regular campaign of 1870, railroad aid was the strongest state issue, yet it constituted only a part of the general movement of the period. It grew out of legislation passed at the regular session of 1869. The General Railroad Aid Law, passed early in the session, authorized towns and cities, and in some cases counties, to loan their credit to railroad corporations and to levy taxes to aid them either by donation or subscription to stock, first submitting the question of proposed aid to a vote of the people.² Under this act a very large amount of aid was voted to projected roads by various municipalities, of which a large portion was represented by bonds in deposit in the office of the State Treasurer awaiting the performance of precedent conditions specified in the notes. In May of 1870, the matter was brought before the Supreme Court of the State for adjudication, and the decision was rendered, three of the four justices agreeing, that all this aid was unconstitutional and void on the fundamental principle that taxation, to be valid, must be levied for a public purpose. To tax a community for the benefit of a private corporation which proposed to construct a railroad, was not a power of the legislature. The public might be

¹ Mrs. N. B. Gardner of the 19th ward, Detroit, and one Mary Wilson in Battle Creek. *Adv. and Tribune*, Apr. 6; *Argus*, Apr. 7.

² *Acts*, 1869, vol. i, pp. 89-95, no. 45; *Mich. Alm.*, 1870, pp. 58-60; *Ann. Cyc.*, p. 500.

incidentally benefited, but "incidental benefits to spring from private undertakings—and these enterprises were considered such—could not be urged as giving them the character of a public object to which unwilling parties could be compelled to contribute."¹

This decision destroyed over \$7,000,000 worth of aid, and bonds to the amount of over \$1,200,000 had already passed into the hands of bona-fide holders. There were various opinions as to the advisability of calling an extra session to meet the emergency, and "to reconstruct the Supreme Court." Inasmuch as the comment immediately after the rendering of this decision was non-partisan in character, and approval and dissent both came from each party, the railroad problem cannot yet be considered a real issue.² It was a question, however, which could easily

¹ The people *ex rel.* the Detroit and Howell Railroad Co. *vs.* The Township Board of Salem, 20 Mich., pp. 452-522. By legislation of 1864, the towns on the line of a railroad projected between Detroit and Howell were authorized to raise money by tax or loan to aid in its construction. The electors of the township of Salem, Washtenaw County, voted such aid, but the township board refused to issue the bonds. Suit was brought by the people against the board, and a mandamus applied for in the interests of the company. Justices Campbell, Cooley and Christiancy supported the decision, Justice Graves dissented. *Mich. Alm.*, 1871, p. 75. *Ann. Cyc.*, 500; *Argus*, June 3, 1870. Hemans, *op. cit.*, pp. 222-3.

² The *Jackson Citizen*, Republican, May 3, 1870, favored an extra session, and the "reconstruction of the Supreme Court." The *Ypsilanti Sentinel*, extremely Democrat, and the *Kalamazoo Republican* charged Justice Cooley with implication in a scheme to injure the Air Line, one of the roads to receive benefits. These accusations were not proven, and they never had any weight. The *Free Press*, Dem., and the radical *Post* both endorsed the decision but favored the extra session. The *Monroe Monitor*, Dem., the *Grand Rapids Democrat*, and the *Grand Rapids Eagle*, Rep., all commended the decision and declared against an extra session. The *Hillsdale Standard*, Rep., regretted the decision, and also the *Marshall Expounder*, Dem., which objected however to legislative action on the grounds that less confidence was to

become a vital issue as soon as sentiment crystallized and partisan opinion took opposite sides. The sentiment in favor of immediate legislative action prevailed, and on June 8th Governor Baldwin called an extra session to meet the 27th of the next month. The result was the passage of a resolution submitting to the people a constitutional amendment with three sections to be voted upon at the general election, November 8th.¹ The first section authorized the legislature to regulate passenger and freight charges on railroads, and prohibited discrimination. The second prohibited the consolidation of parallel or competing lines, while the third permitted the people of the various municipalities to vote the payment of their indebtedness should they so desire, but in no case was the state to become liable for any portion of such bonds. The first two sections were thus restrictive in character, while the tendency of the third was favorable to railroads. Such, then, was the state of the problem when the conventions met in the fall of the year.

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1870

The Democrats held their convention before the Republicans. This was very unusual as it had been customary to

be reposed in the legislature than in the Supreme Court. Prominent lawyers throughout the state took sides in the case and freely declared their opinions for and against it. This summary of the press views was gathered from editorial comments during May and the first two weeks in June.

¹ *Acts*, Extra session of 1870, pp. 13-15, Joint Res., no. 1, approved Aug. 10; *Mich. Alm.*, 1870, p. 26; 1871, p. 75; *World Alm.*, 1871, pp. 69, 70; *Adv. and Trib.*, and *Free Press*, Aug. 11; *Argus*, Aug. 12. The resolution was agreed to in the House by a vote of 67 to 28, and passed the Senate 23 to 4. The division was on party lines and it was evident that the Democrats were united against the measure, while the Republicans refused to express themselves. This proposed amendment, if adopted, was to become "Art. XIX, A, of Railroads."

allow the majority party to nominate their candidates and announce their issues first. The Democracy met in Detroit, Wednesday, August 31st, and arraigned the Radicals for "misuse of power." Their platform dealt mainly with fiscal issues. It declared the protective tariff "a system of plunder whereby labor is compelled to pay tribute to capital," and "tariff for revenue only, all that is warranted by justice and the federal constitution." The system of national banks was denounced as "a monopoly which benefitted certain persons" and which required modification to make its privilege free to all. The platform demanded that public debt should be paid "strictly in accordance with its terms," and while it conceded that "specie or its equivalent is the only sound money," it favored a return to specie payments "no sooner than can be done consistently with laws of trade and interests of the great debtor class."

The principal state issue was, however, the railroad question. Almost three months had passed since the rendering of the decision in the Salem case. Comment, friendly and hostile, had at first been non-partisan. Within this intervening period, however, the court's definition of taxation had become widely known and discussed, and it was generally inferred that the benefits accruing to a railroad corporation were essentially of a private nature. Furthermore, the fact that the Republicans had formed the controlling majority in the legislature which passed the Railroad-Aid Law early in 1869, gave the Democrats sufficient grounds for strongly opposing the entire policy of aid to railroad corporations. They defended the court's position in the Salem case, and declared that "taxation of citizens for private purposes without their consent was a violation of the fundamental principles of justice." The ticket, headed by Charles C. Comstock for Governor, was an unusually strong one which was liable to call out a generous

following, and which the Republicans could not attack on personal grounds.¹

The Republican state convention also met in Detroit on the following day, September 1st, nominated Henry P. Baldwin for Governor to head the state ticket, and made some changes in the organization of the state central committee. Since the organization of the party, the chairman of the committee had resided in Detroit, which therefore became the political centre of the party. Lansing was henceforth to become the centre, and Detroit was given but one member in the state central committee. An obvious result of having a Lansing chairmanship occupied by S. D. Bingham, editor of the *Lansing State Republican*, and leader of the movement for central western supremacy, was thus a decline in the power of the Detroit faction. Another change which was favored by a large number was the reduction and concentration of the membership of the committee. "A few good men should be chosen from localities which are not so widely separated that a quorum is almost impossible," declared an important organ; the committee was not a representative body as intended, for there were members who lived eight hundred miles apart and found it impossible to attend the conferences.

The convention framed resolutions which included the usual amount of recrimination against the Democracy and congratulated the national administration upon the reduction of the national debt. It also rejoiced that the state administration had reduced the state bonded indebtedness by \$1,500,000, notwithstanding a decrease in the taxes of \$485,000 since 1867.²

¹ *Argus*, Sept. 2, 1870.

² The Republicans were supported in their declarations concerning state finances by the statistics of the period. It was true that the bonded indebtedness had fallen from \$3,979,921.25 in Nov. 30, 1866,

The tariff resolution was so ambiguous that there was good reason to credit the statement of the *Advertiser and Tribune* that it was made so purposely. "The policy of revenue is part of the history of the government," it declared, "and has received the sanction in some form of every party." It further observed that "as the war has made larger revenues necessary, they should be so adjusted as to be least prejudicial to the individual producing interests of every class and section, securing the home producer a fair competition against foreign producers." This resolution was certainly non-committal and there was a potent reason for its vague character. The Democrats repeatedly asserted—and the Republicans never successfully disproved the statement—that a considerable proportion of the Republican party of the state was made up of Democrats who had bolted on the slavery-extension issue alone. The seceders insisted, however, that it was rather the party that had forsaken them, and they distinctly declared their agreement with the Democrats on all other subjects, especially free trade.¹ It was estimated by Democratic organs that there were no less than 3,000 of this element, and their number was at least great enough to impress upon

to \$2,385,028.49 in 1870, while direct taxes were reduced from \$880,739.30 in 1867 to \$395,264.97 in 1870. In the former year the rate of assessment was 2.859 mills on the dollar, in 1870, 1.283 mills. *Address of Rep. State Central Committee*, signed by S. D. Bingham; *Mich. Alm.*, 1871, pp. 62-63; *Mich. Man.*, 1873, pp. 336, 350, 351; 1875, p. 316; *Adv. and Trib.*, Sept. 2, 3.

¹ There were proofs of the existence of this faction within the Republican party, but it was not generally influential at this time. *Argus*, Mar. 25, Sept. 23. The "Appeal by Free Trade Republicans," a card in the *Free Press*, Nov. 2, signed by N. B. Eldridge, declared that "the old party lines are breaking up" and that "only two party issues exist at the present,—removal of all political disabilities from the southern states, and free trade." The *Adv. and Trib.*, July 1, declared against protective tariff and the general policy of Chandler.

the Republican convention the necessity for a neutral resolution.

The Republican party was not a unit upon another issue—that of aid to railroad corporations. The division was most evident in the choice of Congressional candidates, and the greatest interest was centered in the third and sixth districts. The Republicans were awake to the growing disfavor towards corporations and the fear of monopolies. and there were evidences of hostility towards Austin Blair on the ground that he had warmly supported in the House measures friendly to these interests. Before the nominating convention of the Third Congressional District in Jackson, he defended the action of Congress and of himself on the public land grant bills, and declared that the policy had been begun by the Democrats in 1857. The Democrats claimed to see in various comments of the Republican press a personal warning to Blair against the support of such measures. It was true that both parties had declared against the land-grant policy to railroads, and the *Post* insisted that “the platforms express the will of the people of the West, and they mean exactly what they say.”¹ Austin Blair described his own attitude in the matter in his speeches before the state Republican convention, and the Congressional convention of the third district.

I do not expect to vote for many, if for any, measures for land grants to railroads. Certainly an indiscriminate granting of public lands for railroad purposes will not get my support. As a rule I design to oppose them, but there are cases in which they are required by sound policy. They ought to be of national and not merely local importance to secure Congressional aid.²

¹ *Post*, Sept. 13.

² Speech of Aug. 30, reported in *Jackson Daily Cit.*, Sept. 5, 1870; favorable comment in the *Adv. and Trib.*, Sept. 1.

There was some uncertainty as to the advisability of naming him for re-election to the lower house of Congress, but the opposition did not prevail against his re-nomination. Some of his friends feared that it might prejudice his chances for the Senatorship, while others urged that no risk should be taken of his missing both House and Senate. In this way the Congressional election in the third district was connected with the approaching Senatorial campaign, and preferences were already being discussed and plans laid. With reference merely to Blair's return to the lower house, a large number of important journals in the lower portion of the state supported him.¹ It is probable that the political feud between Mr. Blair and William A. Howard was responsible for much of the agitation against the former.

This hostility was due to Senatorial rivalry which was to make opponents of the two Howards at the same time. It had been usual in the past for William A. Howard to support Senator Jacob M. Howard, but the former had ambitions of his own which occasioned mutual unfriendliness. The two Howards were not related, but both had emigrated from Vermont while young, and become prominent politicians and office-holders in the same party. Both had been residents of Detroit until shortly before this time when William A. Howard removed to Grand Rapids. The organs favorable to Blair openly insinuated that this step had been taken with the sole motive of becoming an eligible for the Senatorship, as it was generally expected that the central and western portion of the state would demand the

¹ Among these were the *Jackson Cit.*, *Battle Creek Journal*, *Coldwater Rep.*, *Saginaw Daily Enterprise*, *Marshall Statesman* and *Ypsilanti Commercial*, all of which contained much editorial comment during August and September. "It would be a great mistake if Blair should be sacrificed to local prejudices and corrupt combinations outside of his district," *Ypsilanti Com.*, Aug. 20, 1870.

choice in 1871. As Thomas W. Ferry was a resident of Grand Haven, his location was good, but his qualifications were considered unsatisfactory by a considerable number who looked upon him as a weak candidate. Next to the Senator himself, then, Austin Blair was considered the most probable candidate, and it was naturally the desire of the third aspirant, William A. Howard, to put a dangerous rival at a serious disadvantage. None of the charges of implication in land frauds was proven against Blair and his position was not seriously impaired by the alleged favoritism toward corporations.

In 1870 Blair appeared a perfectly orthodox Republican, supporting the suffrage, protective tariff and railway policies of the party. In his speeches of August and September he enthusiastically indorsed President Grant and declared "a universal prosperity testifies to his ability and fidelity." "Let the people sustain him," he urged, "and they will not be disappointed. No charge has been brought against him that deserves an answer. . . . In the approaching elections we must look for some changes, but I do not anticipate any serious defections from the party of the administration." ¹

Disaffection in the sixth district was more troublesome than that in the third. The basis of the situation in the sixth was the alleged corruption of the candidate. In the face of serious charges, the incumbent, John A. Driggs, won the renomination, and the Democrats saw an excellent opportunity for gain. The Saginaw Valley district had always shown considerable Democratic sympathy, and a wise nomination they saw could possibly give Michigan one Democratic Congressman. A convention of Republicans at St. John's openly repudiated their candidate,

¹ *Jackson Cit.*, Sept. 5.

against whom they brought three distinct charges,¹ and declared in favor of Judge Jabez G. Sutherland, the Democratic candidate. The *Saginaw Valley News*, a Republican organ, opposed Driggs and threw its influence for Sutherland, supported by a number of prominent Republicans of the vicinity.² The repudiation of a candidate by a faction of the Republican party and the strength of the Democrats certainly gave the party in power grave cause for apprehension.

In this campaign, the competition for the German vote was unusually active, and its relation to the Prohibition movement made the matter somewhat complicated. The Republicans in their convention declared their sympathy for the Germans in the struggle against the French Emperor, and while this seemed entirely irrelevant in a party platform, it had an underlying purpose. The ostensible cause for this declaration was the friendly attitude of the Germans during the Rebellion, in comparison with the policy of the French, but the resolution was addressed to the 64,000 German voters of the state. The Democrats, on their side, placed a German upon their state ticket, and

¹ He was accused of appointing a non-resident of his district to West Point, for a valuable consideration, of receiving \$5000 for his services in procuring for private parties the passage of the bill fraudulently disposing of an Indian Reservation, and finally of offering by his agents sums of money to several delegates as bribes to induce them to vote for his nomination. The *Clinton County Republican* and the *Saginaw Republican* both preferred a reform candidate, but refused to repudiate Driggs after his nomination. *Argus*, Sept. 16. John F. Driggs was a member of the 39th and 40th Congresses, and Randolph Strickland succeeded him to the 41st. The latter did not appear as a candidate for re-election and it was remarked that it was a rare instance of a Congressman being dropped by the Republican party after one term. Strickland led the opposition against Driggs, and it was widely believed this activity was responsible for the unpopularity of the former. *Adv. and Trib.*, Sept. 16, 1870.

² Letter from Bay City to the *Free Press*, Sept. 10.

further strove to win whatever German following they could by declaring formally against Prohibition.¹ The Prohibition or Temperance party—for the terms were as yet politically synonymous—made nominations for governor and for Congress, the latter in the first five districts. Though it was not strong, it caused considerable apprehension on the part of the two regular organizations, and they both lost some members to it. They could not, however, favor Prohibition or tacitly approve it without alienating the German vote. Both believed the Temperance movement merely the temporary outcome of the somewhat disordered state of politics, and preferred to allow it to go its own way, rather than endanger themselves and lose the reliable German vote, by making concessions.

The election of 1870 was not so important for the tickets put forward as for the policies involved. In 1868, the revised constitution had been rejected, and it was obvious in 1870 that the Republicans sought to effect by amendment of the state constitution what they had failed to accomplish by revision two years before. In addition to the suffrage and railroad amendments there were two other issues which came before the people through proposed amendments to the constitution—internal improvements and salaries. The enthusiasm for internal improvement occasioned the demand for increased powers of supervisors over repair and improvement of public buildings, highways and bridges. Accordingly an amendment was submitted to the people by the legislature allowing \$2,000 to be borrowed or raised by tax in each township for those purposes.² In the second place the salaries question had been a cause of sharp partisan recrimination since the constitu-

¹ *Compilation of Census Statistics for Mich.*, 1870, p. xlvi, table 13, German born population, 64,143. *Jackson Cit.*, Oct. 4; *Argus*, Oct. 21.

² *Mich. Alm.*, 1871, pp. 69, 70. *World Alm.*, 1871, pp. 82, 83.

tion of 1867 was proposed. In the session of 1869 the legislature adopted a resolution recommending an amendment increasing the salaries of state officials, which was submitted at the same time with those on the other three subjects.¹

THE RESULTS OF THE ELECTION

The election of 1870 marked the beginning of the Reform movement which attained a tremendous importance four years later. Henry P. Baldwin was re-elected Governor by a plurality of 16,785, and received 53.8 per cent of the vote. The other members on the ticket received similar votes, never exceeding 19,000. The Temperance candidate for governor received comparatively little support, with less than 2 per cent of the vote.² A comparison of the gubernatorial vote for the last three elections discloses a real decline of Republican strength since 1866. The vote fell from 58.8 per cent to 56.8 per cent two years later, and finally to 53.8 per cent in 1870. The character of the state legislature remained practically unchanged, and the opposition was still limited to one-fifth of the membership.

The gains of the opposition were more apparent in the triumph of Sutherland over Driggs in the sixth district by a majority as large as that which most of the Republican candidates on the state ticket had received.³ The fact that

¹ Salary of Governor from \$1000 to \$2500, Justices of the Circuit Courts, \$1500 to \$2000, State Treasurer, Auditor Gen., Superintendent of Public Instruction, \$1000 to \$2000, Sec. of State, Attorney Gen., Commissioner of state land offices, \$800 to \$2000. *Mich. Man.*, 1869, pp. 302-3.

² *Mich. Man.*, 1871, p. 82; *Mich. Alm.*, 1871, pp. 129, 130; *Ann. Cyc.*, 1868, pp. 492-9, 1870, p. 500; *Trib. Alm.*, 1871, pp. 62, 63. Baldwin received 100,176, Comstock 83,391, and Henry Fish, the Temperance candidate, 2,710.

³ *Mich. Alm.*, p. 83; *Mich. Man.*, p. 232; *Saginaw Enterprise*, Sept. 27, 1870; *Argus*, Sept. 30, Nov. 11. The vote stood 16,618 for Sutherland, 14,879 for Driggs.

two years before the Republicans were sustained by a majority of over 3,000 in that district indicates that they had suffered a loss of almost 5,000. The other five districts elected Republicans to Congress with smaller majorities. In the third, Austin Blair won by a vote of 15,236 to 13,768, a smaller plurality than that of either of his two preceding elections. He barely won in Jackson, his home county, with a vote of 3,365 to 3,353, when his majority in 1868 had been 250. To this extent had the opposition against him been effective. The Democrats were naturally strong in the first district with the city of Detroit, and here the Republican candidate won by a plurality of 901. The closest vote was cast in the fifth, where Omar D. Conger was successful by the margin of 189.¹

The vote on the amendments was examined perhaps more eagerly than that on the candidates. The suffrage amendment was ratified by a closer vote than was polled on any of the other articles—54,105 against 50,098. The salary amendment was rejected by a vote of 68,912 to 36,109 which often crossed party lines, as many Republicans evidently supported the negative.² The amendment increasing the powers of supervisors failed of ratification by a smaller majority. In regard to the railroad question, the first two sections, which were distinctly restrictive in their nature, were adopted, while the last one, validating previous aid, was rejected by almost the reverse vote.³

The majority opinion on the railroad question was thus

¹ *Post*, Nov. 9, 10.

² Thirty-six out of sixty-four counties rejected the salary amendment.

³ *Mich. Alm.*, 1870, p. 58; 1871, pp. 75, 82, 83; *Mich. Man.*, 1871; *Adv. and Trib.*, Nov. 9.

Section 1.....	Yes 78,602.....	No 51,397.
“	“ 76,912.....	“ 51,194.
“	“ 50,078.....	“ 78,453.

clearly indicated—legislative restriction, and absolute repudiation of all promised aid. The natural result was great discouragement to many incipient schemes of railroad building, and there was reason to believe that this was what many counties desired.¹ The railway and salary amendments received warmest support in the north, and the strongest opposition with reference to the former was found in Washington, Wayne, Berrien and Cass counties. The railroad issue thus received a rebuff in the very localities which were most directly concerned. A change had come in the popular mind which contrasted strangely with the enthusiasm which prevailed less than a year before. Just what occasioned this change of attitude is not clear, but there is a probability that the decision of the Supreme Court presented the matter in a light which appealed at once to the people. The vote of the legislature upon the proposed amendment at the extra session disclosed a party division, and the state of popular opinion manifested by personal comment pointed in the same direction. It was in all probability the abstract principle of taxation of the public for private gains, as set forth clearly in the decision, which crystalized sentiment and caused the revulsion against the Republican administration. The lines were well laid for the next campaign, when the element of reform would be introduced into the present issue by the opposition.

It would be interesting to ascertain the relation of the vote on the suffrage amendment to the proportion of negro population in each county. This is practically impossible, however, as the southern counties where the largest percent

¹ Among the lines injured were the Grand Rapids and Indiana; Detroit, Hillsdale and Indiana; Michigan Air Line from Jackson to Niles; Fort Wayne, Jackson and Saginaw; Kalamazoo and South Haven; Chicago and Michigan Lake Shore.

of negro population naturally existed, were strongest in Democratic tendencies. Of the ten counties having one per cent or over of color, six voted in favor of suffrage.¹ Oakland, Washtenaw and Wayne voted for suffrage by large majorities, and Van Buren, Kalamazoo and Calhoun with stronger opposition. Bay, Saginaw, Genesee, Ingham, Macomb, and St. Joseph possessed not more than one-third of one per cent of negro population and they ratified the amendment.² It thus seems improbable that the presence of negroes influenced the vote in any important degree, as there was only one per cent of color in the state as a whole, and Cass County, with its exceptional eight per cent, showed a close vote on the suffrage question. Democratic affiliations were much stronger in determining the results than presence of color, since the twelve counties which rejected suffrage lay to the south and southeast, and had consistently shown Democratic preferences.

As a final generalization, it may be noted that eleven counties went Democratic, of which four were northern, and seven were south and southeastern.³ The counties of the four lower tiers gave rather large votes to the Temperance ticket, the highest point reached being approximately five per cent of the vote for Governor. The unexpected had occurred in favor of the Democrats in the Sixth Congressional District, and in favor of the Republicans in some of the southern counties, where negro suffrage was sustained, contrary to party antecedents or the vote on the

¹ Allegan, Jackson, Oakland, each 1%; Berrien 1.4%; Calhoun 1.5%; Kalamazoo 1.6%; Van Buren 1.8%; Wayne 2.2%; Washtenaw 2.6%; Cass 8%.

² *Mich. Alm.*, 1871, p. 81; *Census of 1870*; Total population in 1870, 1,184,059, Colored 11,849, Whites 1,167,282.

³ Marquette, Keweenaw, Emmet and Ontonagon; Jackson, Livingston, Macomb, Monroe, Oakland, Washtenaw, Wayne. *Mich. Alm.*, pp. 69-72, 82, 83.

party ticket. Wayne County, the centre of the Democracy of the state, naturally elected the entire Democratic ticket but at the same time it gave a strong majority in favor of negro suffrage. Jackson went almost entirely Democratic on the local ticket and voted with the Republicans on the suffrage issue. These apparently contradictory facts can be accounted for on two grounds. In the first place, it was true that in several counties the few affirmative votes were all that were cast. For instance, the suffrage and salary amendments commanded the vote of only 56 per cent of those who voted for governor and the railroad amendment received only 69 per cent. Probably the more immediate reason for these results was the crossing of party lines on the suffrage issue. This was a natural outcome of the general belief that the Fifteenth Amendment had already enfranchised the negro within the state, notwithstanding Sec. 1, of Art. VII, of the state constitution. The state amendment was a mere formality which might best be willingly complied with so that the controversy could be settled in a consistent manner.¹

THE SENATORIAL ELECTION

As we have seen, a strong opposition to the re-election of Senator Jacob M. Howard developed early in 1869, and several names were mentioned as possibilities for the succession. Among them were Austin Blair, Thomas W. Ferry, two members of Congress, and William A. Howard. The last named received an appointment to China—much to his regret—and he declined in order to be able to help turn the tide against Jacob M. Howard. By the autumn

¹ The following papers for the several weeks following election contain the most important material for this summary; *Post, Adv. and Trib., Argus, Jackson Cit., Lansing State Rep., Niles Rep., Kal. Gazette, Grand Rapids Daily Eagle.*

of 1870, the lines of opposition were more clearly drawn. There was a declared need for a change in the office; the locality feeling demanded satisfaction, and furthermore, Howard was charged with supporting the land-grant policy. It was a strange incident for Republicans, even of the conservative class, to assail their Senator for his support of the policy which they had fostered and defended from 1865 to 1869. It is probable that much of the opposition to Howard came from the same source as that to Blair, and with the same motives. It was also plainly stated that he was a "much less useful Senator in attending to the wants and requests of his constituency than Chandler." "So far as any results of his public services have been reflected upon our state, Mr. Howard might as well have hailed from California." This was the opinion of a strong faction in the south and west-central portion of the state. In Detroit the verdict was different though not contradictory. "In his ability to grapple with large public questions and in his range of information, Senator Howard has well sustained himself, and conferred honor upon the state." It was only a matter of considering his local or his federal activity of the greater importance.

Blair had been an active Radical in the House, but his chances were injured by the "Fish letter" of February 28, 1869. This was written by Austin Blair himself from Washington, D. C., to George W. Fish of Flint, collector of internal revenue of the sixth district. It was obviously confidential and the recipient inadvertently left it in his desk where it was found by his successor. The letter gained publicity, partly through the activity of Mr. Strickland, who was at that time also hostile towards the dominant Republican faction, and believed that its publicity would aid Blair and injure Howard. In this letter, written shortly after the senatorial election of 1869, Blair ex-

pressed himself in part as follows: "There was nothing in the senatorial contest to give one great confidence in political affairs. It furnished more evidence of the inconstancy of politicians and of how little timber it really takes to make a great man of." In speaking of Howard, he declared him to be "the right bower of all the corrupt rings here." Of Ferry, he unfortunately added, "there is not enough of him to make a man apprehensive," a phrase which, in the light of the outcome of the approaching contest, was somewhat amusing. The entire group of Republican possibilities Blair termed "a lot of corrupt scoundrels" who "will keep no agreements except such as put money into their pockets." "You say, what are we coming to? This is a question I have revolved a good deal in my own mind, and cannot find a very satisfactory answer, but I think there is but one remedy, and that is defeat. Whenever the people learn the truth, they will apply the wholesome corrective." With reference to the appointment of office-seekers, Blair closed by saying: "It is a comfort that the rascals will have to disappoint a good many anyway."¹

Nothing could express more clearly than this letter Blair's bitter disappointment at his repeated failures to realize his own ambition. Probably some of his closest friends believed in 1869 that he would permanently give up the struggle for the Senate, but the contest of 1871 was certainly uppermost in his mind. At first he was apparently friendly with Howard, but the publication of this letter at once made them avowed enemies. Blair refused to retract a single word and declared "he would make no apology for writing the letter, he would ask no mercy, and would not even admit it to be an imprudence." In

¹ *Argus*, Jan. 13, 1871.

reply to this unfavorable characterization, Howard published a letter in which he declared the accusation "totally and unqualifiedly false," and termed the author, among other epithets, "a deliberate slanderer—unworthy of the association and respect of gentlemen."¹

This estrangement of two of the foremost leaders of the Republican party and the reciprocal accusations that naturally resulted were probably of great importance in deciding the result unfavorably to both. There was apparently no great amount of truth in either charge of corruption, as both Blair and Howard were considered honest, and still are held in that reputation. Blair was supported by an immense number of influential journals throughout the state—no less than forty—and was considered favorably by the western faction. There was also a visible division in the allegiance of the Michigan delegation in Congress upon the question of candidacy. A Democratic observer stated that Blair's best and only friend there was Driggs of the sixth district, who was deserted, he said, by all Republicans save Blair.² Beaman had his own candidacy in view, Ferry decidedly objected to William A. Howard of his own district, Stoughton and Strickland favored the selection of Jacob M. Howard, and Chandler very definitely preferred him or any man who could defeat Blair. It was said that Chandler advised his friends, "in case the contest is a close one, throw over all four candidates and bring out Judge Withey." The prospects appeared to Washington observers favorable to Jacob Howard, and he was certain of his re-election.

The personal hostility of the leaders was a dangerous

¹ *Adv. and Trib.*, Feb. 1, 1871; *Argus*, Feb. 3.

² Washington correspondent of the *Free Press*, Dec. 27, 1870. The list of journals favorable to Blair is given, with excerpts, in the *Jackson Cit.*, Dec. 13, 1870.

condition for a party against whom the opposition was visibly gaining ground. It was observed by Republican organs within the state that if the "proscription of Republicans on account of their personal preferences does not cease, the Republicans have elected their last Senator."¹

At the Republican legislative caucus six ballots were necessary before a majority was obtained. Ferry and Blair both received 30 on the first ballot; on the second, fourth and fifth Blair led, but on the sixth and final Ferry was chosen. Neither of the Howards showed a large following, and Blair, who was stronger now than ever before, again lost out by only a small margin.² The success of Ferry was due largely to his position on the tariff question.³ He was the guard of the Michigan lumbering interests and had exceedingly strong support in the northern part of the state.

The Democratic caucus on the second ballot gave unanimous preference to H. N. Walker of the *Detroit Free Press*. Two other prominent Democrats had each received five votes in the first ballot, Benjamin G. Stout and Henry Chamberlain.⁴ The election was held Wednesday, January 18th. Ferry received 24 votes in the Senate, 70 in the House, while Walker was given 5 in the Senate, and 29 in

¹ *Adv. and Trib.*, Dec. 29, 1870.

² *Lansing State Rep.*, Jan. 4, 1871; *Argus*, Jan. 6. The following table will show the votes of the several ballots.

	1	2	3	4	5	6
Ferry.....	30	31	37	37	41	50
Blair	30	32	35	40	43	43
J. Howard	20	16	16	15	9	4
Wm. Howard..	17	10	9	5	4	—

³ *Globe*, May 24, 1870, Appx., pp. 370-3.

⁴ *Lansing State Rep.*, Jan. 11; *Argus*, Jan. 13.

the House. Three Republican Senators were absent, and one Representative.¹

The election was shortly followed by the death of Jacob M. Howard, Sunday, April 2nd, and one of the radical leaders of the old type thus disappeared from politics. The new Senator, whose usefulness was to lie in the field of parliamentary tactics and finance, had enjoyed ample political training. He was a delegate-at-large to the National Republican Convention of 1860, and was one of its vice-presidents. In 1864 he was elected Representative to the Thirty-ninth Congress, and re-elected to the succeeding three Congresses. It was during the last that he resigned his seat to accept the Senatorship. He was chairman of the Committee on Revision of Rules, and on the death of Vice-President Wilson, he served as acting Vice-President until March 4, 1877. Up to this time, his popularity was due mainly to his excellent parliamentary abilities which he repeatedly had occasion to exercise. In his purely legislative activities in Congress, he confined himself entirely to financial interests and was soon to become prominent as one leader of the soft-money party.

Contemporary with the passing of Howard and the election of Ferry, it happened that a new series of issues presented themselves, and the problems of constitutional reconstruction and the enfranchisement of the negro were relegated to the background. Accordingly, the questions immediately connected with the war gave way to the demands of the Reform, the Granger, and the Greenback movements.

¹ *Post, Adv. and Trib.*, Jan. 19, 1871; *Lansing State Rep.*, Jan. 20; *Argus*, Jan. 20, 27.

CHAPTER V

THE CAMPAIGN OF 1872, AND THE COMPLETE FAILURE OF THE LIBERAL MOVEMENT IN MICHIGAN

PRELIMINARY POLITICS

THE attitude of the Democracy of Michigan at the beginning of 1871 was clear from the resolutions adopted in State Convention, February 21st.

While we denounce partisanship in judicial offices—yet the Democrats ought to elect justices sympathetic with Democratic ideas of limitation of power. The class legislation of the Republican party, by which immense private fortunes are being consolidated in the hands of the few to the detriment of the many, the public domain wasted, monopolies created, and sections of the country fostered at the expense of the greater portion of the nation, deserves the reprehension of all advocates of equal rights for all men.

The platform demanded the removal from citizens of all political disabilities incurred by reason of their conduct in the war. It declared its purpose of reforming the abuses and corruptions introduced into the public service by the Republican party. The employment of troops of the United States to influence elections was denounced as inimical to free government.¹

Two days later the Republicans convened and issued the declaration that

as the Republican party proved a good party in time of war—so it has proved a good party in time of peace, reconstruct-

¹ *Free Press, Kal. Gazette*, Feb. 22, 1871; *Argus*, Feb. 24.

ing rebellious states in the interest of freedom, maintaining inviolate the public faith, establishing equality of all men before the law, and establishing the government in such a manner as best to promote the general good.

They indulged in praise of Grant's administration, with special reference to the reduction of taxation and the national debt.¹ The result of the annual election of Justice of the Supreme Court was the victory of the able and experienced Republican candidate, James V. Campbell, by a plurality of 18,500. A Temperance candidate, Albert Williams, was in the field, and received the small support of 1719.²

In March, 1871, the attention of the legislature was again directed to the amendment of the constitution in several important respects. A joint resolution was passed recommending an amendment providing for the payment by the counties, townships and municipalities of all bonds and other obligations heretofore issued or negotiated. The question of payment was first to be submitted to the electors, of whom a majority was required to sanction the meeting of the indebtedness.³

Other amendments looked to limiting the number of judicial circuits and to the increase of the salary of circuit judges from \$1,500 to \$2,500.⁴ There was strong agita-

¹ *Post, Adv. and Trib.*, Feb. 24, 1871; *Lansing State Rep.*, Mar. 1. McPherson, 1871, p. 139.

² O. Darwin Hughes, the Democratic nominee who had run the previous election also, received 74,740. The Regents of the University received practically the same vote. *Ann. Cyc.*, 1871, p. 510-515; *Mich. Alm.*, 1872.

³ *Acts*, 1871, p. 398, April 15, 1871; *S. Jour.*, Mar. 23, 1871, pp. 1202-5; *H. Jour.*, pp. 240-3. This section was to be added as Sec. 3, Art. XIX, A, of Railroads.

⁴ *H. Jour.*, Mar. 15, vol. ii, pp. 1413-4. *S. Jour.*, pp. 1184-5. *Acts*, 1871, vol. i, pp. 404-6, no. 36.

tion in favor of the last, as it was felt that any good lawyer could earn in private practice more than the salary of a circuit judge. An increase would therefore tend to secure better talent than was possible under the old rate of remuneration. The railroad amendment was practically the same as had been rejected at the fall election of 1870, and the chances were against it now.

Bad feeling was engendered early in 1872 by the reapportionment of the Congressional districts within the state. As Michigan had now become entitled to nine Representatives in place of six, some rearrangement was necessary. The act of reapportionment was considered by the Democrats a "device for burying the Democratic counties under an extra load of Republican majorities," and though such an attitude was to be expected from a minority party, there were evidences of truth in the assertion. The measure was opposed by six Republicans in the Senate and sixteen in the House, with the vote standing 19 to 11 in the former, and 50 to 40 in the latter. The opposition was strong and its passage in the House was exceedingly close.¹

During this session of the legislature, there was an occurrence which clearly explains the demand this year for morality in politics, with special reference to state administration. A petition signed by a number of residents of Lansing was presented to the House requesting investigation of the conduct of Charles A. Edmonds, the Commissioner of the State Land Office. The select committee to which this was referred reported serious charges against the conduct and administration of the incumbent and sev-

¹ *Acts*, 1872, Extra Session, pp. 74-5, no. 44. The population of the state was 1,184,638 by the census of 1870, and the district average was 131,626. By the new apportionment, they ranged from 92,843 to 163,074. Only two Democrats supported the bill as finally agreed upon by the conference committee, one for the purpose of moving a reconsideration.

eral of his clerks. Impeachment proceedings were begun and the managers presented eleven articles embodying charges of corrupt administration and gross immorality. On May 24th after a hearing of twenty-four days the Senate failed to convict him on any of the eleven articles. Though he was declared acquitted of all charges, it was generally conceded that the testimony was so damaging that he ought in all decency to resign.¹ It was urged by Edmonds' friends that the petition for investigation grew out of the animosity of a resident of Lansing who was a discharged deputy of the commissioner. Whatever may have been the personal element involved, enough evidence was taken to afford sufficient grounds for a demand of reform.

THE LIBERAL MOVEMENT IN MICHIGAN IN 1872

The liberal movement in Michigan was led by Austin Blair, whose abandonment of former party allegiance brought down upon him a storm of bitter denunciation. It is indeed strange to see an orthodox Republican leader from 1860 to 1868 become the first adherent of the liberal movement in Michigan. There were early indications of his dissatisfaction with the party, and rumors of a schism were started in March, immediately upon the announcement of his resolution in Congress calling for investigation of the charges against Secretary Robeson. The break was in evidence April 9th, when he delivered the oration at a public ceremonial in Detroit.² On this occasion he expressed strong opposition to centralization of the government, and asked that amnesty be granted to the ex-rebels.³ The motive for

¹ *Mich. as a State*, iv, pp. 69-73; *Adv. and Trib.*, May 25, 1872.

² The unveiling of the monument to the soldiers and sailors of Michigan in the Civil War.

³ The Regulars denounced him as a deserter and "confidence poli-

his action was promptly asserted by the "Regulars" to be the promise of the Democratic nomination for governor, and the Senatorial succession to Chandler. It would be difficult to say precisely how much truth, if any, there was in this statement. It was true that he did receive the nomination for governor, and possibly he would have been chosen to succeed Chandler had not the Liberals been so thoroughly defeated in the fall elections. Possibly the desire to avenge past defeats at the hands of his party caused him to see more clearly its defects. Neither of these reasons, however, is necessary to account for his change of allegiance, for he had once before changed as radically, when there were no past disappointments to stimulate him, and no greater opportunities open by the change.

He was unquestionably a man of strong convictions, and his independence of thought prevented him from being a successful politician. He was repeatedly called upon in the course of the campaign to defend his change of allegiance, and this he did on the grounds that party principles are of far greater consequence than party success. The old war questions, he urged, were succeeded by new issues, the leading one being reform, and this the Republicans were unwilling to concede. "I am compelled to say that this administration as a whole is simply damnable,"¹ he declared, and throughout the campaign he insisted that it was

tician along with Schurz, Trumbull, Greeley and the Blairs." His oration was called a "stump speech . . . in favor of exploded states rights theories of the Democratic party", and his plea for universal amnesty for rebels, an "insult to fallen heroes." *Post*, Apr. 10. For comment, *Argus*, Apr. 19, 26.

¹ In his speech at the Greeley-Brown ratification meeting held July 10 in Jackson, he referred at length to his earlier history and defended his abandonment of the Whig party in 1848, as well as his recent change. *Free Press*, July 11; *Argus*, July 12. The home paper of Blair, the *Jackson Citizen*, refused to join in slandering him, but declined to follow him out of the party.

executive misconduct and federal mal-administration that drove him from his party.

There are some grounds, however, for the suspicion that the ill-concealed disaffection in the Republican party which drew along with it unpleasant accusations against Blair's motives in Congress, was a cause of deeper significance than was generally conceded at the time. It is a question if some of the Republican leaders, finding dissensions imminent on several issues, did not seek to relieve the party of all blame by attributing the fault to some individual whom they could chastise before their constituents. If this was the truth, it was but natural that Blair should be the victim, as the men most influential in the party at that time were not those who would be expected to call themselves his friends. Chandler had emerged victorious from the Senatorial contest with Blair the year before, and the Howards were obviously his Senatorial rivals the coming campaign.

The Liberal movement did not from the first receive strong support in Michigan. It was true that Austin Blair, on his return to Washington from a visit to his constituency, declared the anti-Grant feeling in the south portion of the state very general among Republicans. He found the people "hostile to the reckless extravagance of the administration, and clamoring for a change."¹ But in his enthusiasm he was perhaps inclined to overrate its importance, for there are indications that Liberalism was met with great hesitancy on the part of Michigan politicians. Among the Democrats and disaffected Republicans the declarations of the Cooper Institute Meeting of April 12th were considered weak and non-committal.² "Though the

¹ Washington Correspondent to *N. Y. World*, April 16.

² The mass meeting held in Cooper Institute, New York City, emphasized the growing importance of the comparatively small body

speeches were pointed and direct, we cannot say as much for the platform adopted. . . . The omissions in this creed are more noticeable than the declarations. In short, it is a milk and water affair, a very good specimen of how not to do it."¹

The campaign was exceedingly complicated this year, as there were two state conventions held by each of the three parties—an early one for the appointment of delegates to the national convention, and a later one for the nomination of a state ticket. Besides the regular proceedings, there were also irregular and preliminary meetings and conferences required by the particular exigencies of the campaign. There was an unusual delay this spring on the part of the Liberal opposition, due undoubtedly to the fact that it had no previous organization.

An informal meeting of local Liberal leaders was held in Detroit² to consider the appointment of delegates to the Cincinnati Convention—the national convention of the new party, which was called for May 1st. It was impracticable in the short time that remained to call a state convention for the purpose, and the conference recommended that each town, city, and county send delegates who should there meet, organize and appoint such committees and take such action as would be necessary to represent the state. "All Republicans" were invited "who believe a change should be made in the management of the government and

of prominent persons who demanded a change in the method of treatment of the South. The speakers on this occasion were Trumbull and Schurz. Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vi, pp. 413-4.

¹ *Argus*, April 19, 1872.

² The conference was held at the Biddle House on Thursday evening, April 18. The call was issued April 22, and signed by Duncan Stewart, Chairman, D. C. Holbrook of Detroit, T. C. Hall of Hudson, W. S. Maynard of St. Joseph. *Free Press*, April 19.

its administration purified," and a large attendance was urged. Names of influential Republicans inclined to this direction were requested in order that some organization could be effected through correspondence. Blair returned to Michigan, and openly declared his support of the movement and his intention to go to Cincinnati.¹

With reference to the nomination of a presidential candidate, there was no declared preference among the disaffected Republicans in Michigan, though Charles Francis Adams and Gratz Brown were apparently in highest favor. Many preferred David Davis on account of his past associations with Lincoln. They believed that his former relations with President Lincoln would insure him substantial support of members from both parties. In the conferences of the Michigan delegation at its head-quarters before the convention, it appeared that Adams, Brown and Davis were all popular. Notwithstanding this fact, the entire delegation gave its support to Greeley upon his nomination in the convention. It may be suspected, however, that some did so with reluctance.²

When the results of the Cincinnati Convention became known, some organs optimistically rejoiced that Greeley had been preferred to Judge Davis, since they opposed the entrance into politics of a Justice of the Supreme Court.³ It was generally thought more probable than ever that the Democrats would now nominate a regular ticket. If this was done, many believed that Greeley would withdraw

¹ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vi, p. 413.

² Letter of Apr. 29 from J. P. Thompson, *Jackson Cit.*, May 4, 1872; interview with Mr. Edward W. Barber of Jackson, editor of *Jackson Patriot*.

³ *Free Press*, May 6, 1872; *Marshall Expounder*, May 9; *Argus*, May 10.

from the canvass, and the Republican candidate would be successful.¹

Austin Blair, the leader of the Michigan Liberals, seemed on the whole, well pleased with the choice. In one of his speeches early in the campaign, he expressed the warmest personal friendship for Greeley and declared him his preference as a reformer. He believed that Adams had no hold upon the laboring people, especially of the West.²

THE DEMOCRACY AND THE LIBERALS

After the Cincinnati convention, there was naturally a great measure of uncertainty and anxiety among the Democrats as to the most advisable course for the State Convention to pursue, which would meet July 2nd. In reply to an inquiry concerning the attitude of the party in lower Michigan during the spring of 1872, a reliable observer showed that there was a wide divergence in the views of three distinct classes. First were those who believed the Democracy was a lost cause, and no further harm could be accomplished by supporting Greeley. Second, those who, believing that the only way of defeating Grant was the election of Greeley, would vote for him on purely partisan grounds. The third class actively protested against the nomination of

¹ *Jackson Cit.*, May 4, which admitted that the "contingencies are innumerable, and Mr. Greeley may develop unexpected strength." The *Kal. Tel.*, May 14, declared that "every man at Cincinnati had his own grievance and labored for revenge. The *Adv. and Tribune*, May 16, charged Greeley with conduct "approaching rank apostasy." The *Battle Creek Journal*, May 8, *Marshall Statesman*, May 9, two Independent Republican journals, regretted the selection, while the *Ypsilanti Sentinel*, known as a Copperhead sheet, was too ultra-Democratic to support Greeley.

² The Greeley-Brown ratification meeting at Jackson, July 10: In this speech Blair termed the Adamses "a family of office-seekers" and remarked that "one son of the recent candidate wants to be Governor of Massachusetts, and another will want to be President as soon as he is old enough." *Jackson Cit.*, July 11.

Greeley at Baltimore, and declared they would not support him for any reason. They asserted that the party was not obliged to adopt the Liberal candidate, and they looked with preference upon Groesbeck, Hendricks, Thurman or Adams. It was generally believed, however, that the Cincinnati ticket would be indorsed and a fusion state ticket agreed upon by both branches of the opposition.¹ A large meeting of the "Democratic Association" convened in Detroit May 21st, and resolved that the declaration of the Cincinnati convention was "evidence of the progress of public opinion". They declared in favor of "harmonizing the action of the Liberal Republican and Democratic parties in the coming presidential election", and thus gave a strong impulse to the idea of a coalition.

The preliminary convention was held in Lansing, July 2nd. Four delegates at large and eighteen district delegates were elected to represent the Michigan Democracy in the national convention at Baltimore. The state convention endorsed the principles embodied in the Cincinnati platform, and directed the members to vote as a unit.² When the Michigan delegation to Baltimore took a preliminary test vote on the presidential preference, the

¹ Elihu B. Pond of the *Mich. Argus*, May 31.

² The delegates-at-large were William A. Moore, of Detroit, a member of the National Committee, E. H. Lothrop, Fidas Livermore and Hon. J. G. Sutherland. Each was allowed to appoint his own substitute. The last named was the successful Democratic opponent of J. T. Driggs in the sixth District two years before, and was recognized as a very able legalist and a man of reliable principles. *Official Proceedings of the National Dem. Convention*, 1872, pp. 44, 60, 69. *Free Press*, July 3; *Argus*, July 5. McPherson, 1872, p. 163. The same day and place a Liberal Republican meeting was held, and among the conspicuous members were Austin Blair and J. T. Driggs. The arrangement of simultaneous conventions at the same place foreshadowed the system formally adopted a little later to secure unity of purpose and action.

entire body except Hawley and Briggs of the first district voted for Greeley and Brown. These members favored Groesbeck and Hancock. Two others had at first opposed the acceptance of the Cincinnati candidates, but later changed their preference, and when the gentlemen of the first district yielded, Michigan's vote was unanimous for Greeley.

The adoption of the Cincinnati ticket at Baltimore was accepted almost without adverse comments by the Democrats in Michigan, who promptly took up the heavy burden of the campaign. Of the important Democratic journals, only the *Free Press* declared its hostility to Greeley and Brown, as it always preferred Adams. It had been one of the earliest advocates of the Cincinnati Convention, and had at one time favored dispensing entirely with the Democratic National Convention. Now it considered the outcome of the Liberal movement so unsatisfactory as to justify repudiation and independent action on the part of the Democrats. Later, however, it returned to the support of the Liberals.¹

Of the prevailing attitude of the Democratic press, the following declarations are typical:

In accordance with our previously declared policy—we place their name [Greeley and Brown] at the head of our column, and invite for them the votes of the Democrats. They were not our choice—but to withhold our vote is to lend our influence to Grant and Wilson. We regard the defeat of Grant necessary to the best interests of the country. As between him and Greeley—and no other choice is now left—we cannot hesitate for a moment.²

¹ *Free Press*, Apr. 16, July 11, 1872.

² *Argus*, July 12. Similar expressions are found in the following: *National Dem.*, Cassopolis, July 11; *Jackson Patriot*, July 12. The *Grand Rapids Dem.* was the leading Greeley organ in western Michigan. Large ratification meetings were held in Jackson, July 10, and in Detroit, July 17 and July 22.

The Liberals could consistently show more enthusiasm for Greeley than the Democrats could, and among the leading speakers at the large Liberal ratification meetings were Blair, Peck, Pringle, Driggs, and Strickland. It was observed by several regular Republican papers that the Liberal leaders were disappointed office-seekers, and whatever importance the fact may have had, the assertion was in part true at least.¹

The preliminary Liberal Republican state convention met at Jackson, July 25th, and was a pronounced success. Trumbull addressed the meeting, and Blair, Driggs and Strickland were there. In the evening the state central committees of the Democrat and Liberal Republican wings of the Greeley-Brown movement held a joint session and unanimously adopted a plan of co-operation which would have been efficient, had not the movement been doomed from the beginning. Until all nominations were made, the two branches were to maintain separate organizations and each was to be represented in primary meetings, and in county, congressional, legislative and state conventions by its own appointed delegates. The conventions were to be held by the two parties at the same times and places, and all nominations made by joint conference. It was recommended that all county conventions elect delegates to the state and their respective Congressional conventions in order to facilitate organization. Each wing was thus made a high contracting party to all nominations, which would therefore be acceptable to both, since each was bound by the action of its delegates. This was the system adopted in some of the other states and recommended by both National Committees. The formation of Greeley Clubs was urged in all localities, and the campaign executive com-

¹ *Post*, Aug. 1.

mittee jointly appointed by the two state central committees, consisted of four Democrats and three Liberal Republicans.¹

In pursuance of the joint conference plan of this year, both the regular—as distinguished from the preliminary—Democratic and Liberal Republican State Conventions were held at Grand Rapids, August 22nd. Nominations were made upon the joint recommendation of the Conference Committees, and eleven Presidential Electors were chosen, among whom were Charles S. May and Randolph Strickland. Austin Blair received the nomination for Governor as the Regulars had predicted, and they now felt assured that their earlier impression of Blair's motives was proven. They called the ticket "obscure and essentially correct". It was true that the members of the state ticket were not so popular and well-known as they might have been had a larger following presented themselves as possibilities. The ticket was, however, beyond the reproach of Republicans on personal grounds, and that was the important point in the minds of the opposition. The Congressional nominations of the opposition were far more popular than the state ticket.

Under the new apportionment and on the basis of past votes, the third district was most strongly Republican. It included Branch, Calhoun, Jackson, Barry and Eaton Counties. In this district John Parkhurst, the Reform candidate, was a Democrat and his Republican opponent was George Willard of the radical *Battle Creek Journal*. Augustus C. Baldwin, of the sixth district, was a Democrat, as was Wisner of the eighth. The fourth, fifth, and seventh chose Liberal Republican candidates, while the second nominated an academic man of no special partisan in-

¹ *Free Press, Argus*, July 26.

clinations.¹ The names presented this year included the strongest representatives of the Reform movement.

There was some sympathy in the state with the "Straight Democratic" movement, but it was severely denounced by all the Reform organs. The response was so weak to the call for a "State Convention" in Jackson, Monday, September 23rd, that the members met in a private room and a *Post* reporter was at first taken for a delegate. The convention nominated a state ticket, and chose Presidential electors and a State Central Committee. It declared that "in view of the present political contest" it put up a ticket so that Democrats need not be denied the privilege of voting for distinctly Democratic candidates. It indorsed the nomination of O'Connor and Adams and the platform of the Louisville convention. William W. Wheaton was chairman, and by the close of the convention, seventeen members were present. In the evening there was a mass-meeting attended by less than a hundred persons, and while this was being held a large Greeley procession paraded the streets. The enthusiasm was obviously wanting which would warrant the nomination of Congressional and county delegates, and though the little meeting at first considered it, they shortly abandoned the idea.²

THE REGULAR REPUBLICANS

On account of the close relation existing between the activities of the Liberal Republicans and Democrats of Michigan this year, it was necessary, in order to preserve the continuity of the story, to omit the Republicans from the narrative up to this point. Their share in the campaign

¹ *Traverse City Herald*, *St. Clair Rep.*, *Pontiac Gazette*, *Saginaw Valley News*, *Saginaw Enterprise*, for the months of August and September, 1872.

² *Free Press*, Sept. 28.

presented no such complexities as did that of their allied opponents. The state convention which met May 16th at Jackson elected delegates to the national convention and adopted a platform very similar to that of a year before. "The unexampled prosperity of the country—and the visible dissolution of the Democratic party so long hostile to justice and equal rights—are the satisfactory proofs of national confidence in a Republican administration of the government." General Grant was declared as faithful in the cabinet as in the field, and the platform continued: "Relying upon his honest heart and pure purpose, his renomination to the presidency is earnestly desired by the great mass of the Republican party."¹ The delegates chosen to the Philadelphia convention numbered twenty-two, and it was declared that not an office-holder was to be found among them.

Early in August the Republicans held their state nominating convention, which named John G. Bagley for Governor, and formulated another platform. This called for economy in government expenditure, and a more liberal standard of wages. It was evident that the Republicans were competing with the Liberals this year for the votes of the wage-earning classes.²

Early in June the Republican national convention met in Philadelphia, and William A. Howard, as chairman of the Michigan delegation, took a rather prominent part in the proceedings. When the roll was called upon the adoption of the platform and the election of each of the two national candidates, he announced the unanimous support of the state. In his response to the call for the vote on President, he declared his wish that Michigan had 44 in-

¹ *Post, Adv. and Trib.*, May 17, 1872; *Lansing State Rep.*, May 22. McPherson, 1872, p. 163.

² *Palladium*, Aug. 9, 1872; *Lansing State Rep.*, Aug. 15.

stead of 22 votes to cast.¹ Before the balloting for Vice-President began, he briefly addressed the convention in favor of Colfax, and pleaded that the convention might not "endanger a doubtful state by insulting her noble son." He conceded all the good qualities of Henry Wilson, but believed Colfax was as able a man, and a wiser choice.

In Michigan, as elsewhere, the chief characteristic of the contest was personal comment, and while the Reform journals exposed the shortcomings of the dominant party, the latter complained of "uncalled-for slander, and incessant abuse". The partisan recrimination upon the desertion of so noted a Radical as Blair gave the politics of this state an unusually violent character. It was but natural that after two changes of affiliation he was a subject for doubt and suspicion by both parties. Even the Democrats were skeptical after his ultra-radical career in the House, and though they supported him before the election, they subsequently declared him an unfortunate candidate to ask support of those whom he had opposed with particular violence during the last twelve years. The Regulars were certain that even the leadership of Carl Schurz could not win the Germans to the opposition, and this was in most cases true. It was necessary in Michigan as elsewhere to vindicate Greeley's furnishing of bail to Jefferson Davis, which was declared by the Liberals a "wise and generous deed".² The editorial and exchange columns of Republican newspapers were filled with the stock-in-hand Greeley selections which Chandler aided materially in procuring for campaign purposes.

¹ *Official Proceedings of the National Republican Convention*, 1872, pp. 161, 171, 172. The Mich. delegation consisted of 22 regular members, four delegates-at-large, and two from each of the nine districts. Each had his alternate.

² *Post*, Sept. 23; *Adv. and Trib.*, Sept. 28, 1872; *Pol. Pamphlets*, K-27. "Greeley vs. Greeley." *Jenison Coll.*

THE ELECTION .

The result of the election in Michigan certainly discouraged any hopes of a reaction that the Democrats may have entertained in 1870. Grant received nearly 60,000 votes over Greeley, and 62.66 per cent of the entire vote cast for President. A large gain was made since 1868, when he received 56.98 per cent of the vote—which was still one per cent better than 1864. The Straight Democrats gave O'Connor 2,873 votes, while Black, the Temperance nominee, received 1,271.¹ Only two counties out of seventy went Liberal, and the straight Democratic vote for President was most prominent in the four southern tiers of counties and in the southeast—a fact entirely consistent with their past history.²

The votes for governor disclosed a somewhat smaller percent of Republican gain. Bagley received 61.84 per cent; Blair, 36.38 per cent; William M. Ferry, Straight Democrat, 1.18 per cent, and Henry Fish, Temperance, .6 per cent. It was thus manifest that the opposition to the presidential candidate of the Liberals was stronger than that to Blair, the gubernatorial nominee. As 217,351 votes were cast for President, and 222,511 for governor, it was also evident that more were willing to commit themselves upon the choice of governor. The legislature of 1873-1874 would be made up of 31 Republicans, 1 Demo-

¹ Grant received 136,199, Greeley 77,020. The Straight Democratic vote averaged only 1.3%, while the Temperance reached little more than 5%. *Mich. Man.*, 1873, pp. 231-310; *Mich. Alm.*, 1873, pp. 28, 84; *Tribune Alm.*, 1873, p. 65; *Adv. and Trib.*, Nov. 6, 7.

² The following gives the percent of Democratic vote in eleven counties where the support was strongest: Wayne, 1; Calhoun 1.4; Washtenaw 1.6; Lenawee 1.8; Berrien 1.8; Hillsdale 1.9; Saginaw 2; Oakland 2.5; Livingston 2.5; Ottawa 2.8; Van Buren 2.9. Ottawa thus diverged from its customary Republican leaning. Temperance reached its highest mark in Calhoun, Isabella and Delta counties where the votes were respectively 1.6%, 12.5%, and 25.6%.

crat in the upper house, while the proportion in the lower was 94 to 6. The Republican majority thus rose to 120, and was obviously practically absolute. In all nine Congressional Districts, Republicans were elected.

The proposed amendment relative to the payment of railroad-aid bonds was rejected by a strong vote, and from a second refusal it appeared that the people were positively unwilling to legalize the aid already voted. It was pleaded, however, by some Republican organs that the failure to adopt this amendment would "savor of repudiation".¹ The amendments pertaining to the limitation of the number of judicial circuits and the salary increase for circuit judges were rejected by smaller majorities. Much of the work of the session of 1871 thus came to nothing and as the desired changes could not be wrought by amendment, the other alternative would be tried again and revision shortly undertaken.

The earlier decline in the Republican party, as evidenced by the successive gubernatorial and Congressional votes and the growing discontent within the Republican party, had seemed auspicious for a "tidal wave" so often predicted by Democratic organs. The outcome of the Cincinnati convention, however, at once silenced all expressions of optimism and the party organs settled down to campaign labor in the face of very discouraging odds. In some respects, Austin Blair's support was a hindrance rather than a source of strength, as a defense of his action was incessantly demanded by the Regulars. They relied mainly upon the absence of Democrats from the polls on November 5th, and this proved to be the most disastrous feature of the election for the Liberal movement.²

¹ *Adv. and Trib.*, Sept. 29.

² *Post*, Oct. 15; *Argus*, Oct. 25; Blair was defeated in Jackson,—his home county,—a fact of which the Regulars made great capital. *Statistics of Mich.*, 1870, pp. lxii-lxiv.

After the election was over, the Democratic and Liberal papers were free to express themselves, and it was evident that most of them despaired of success from the beginning. The nomination of Greeley was, of course, the first great mistake. In the second place, it was agreed that he should have been repudiated and a new candidate chosen. If the Liberals themselves did not venture to do this, the Democrats "should have turned their backs upon Greeley and Brown, and when at Baltimore nominated the best men in the party"—Adams and Groesbeck. Another great error was made by placing Austin Blair at the head of the state ticket. A war Democrat would have commanded the support of the disaffected Republicans and yet would have been favored by the state Democracy. It was impossible for the latter to forget Blair's ultra-radicalism of the past, while the former would not have hesitated to support a reliable War Democrat.

Such then was the extent of Michigan's response to the Liberal movement. The *Post* believed this election to be a real "political revolution", and declared it "scarcely possible to doubt that this will be the death of the Democratic party."¹ It was to be very different, however, in the succeeding campaigns, when the lessons in organization and nomination of this contest were to prove of immense value to both branches of the opposition.

¹ Nov. 7, 1872.

CHAPTER VI

THE SCHISM IN THE REPUBLICAN PARTY IN MICHIGAN AND THE SUCCESS OF THE DEMOCRACY

PRELIMINARY POLITICS AND CONSTITUTIONAL REVISION

"THE revelations of the past winter have shown that the necessity for overthrowing the party in power is greater than was thought last year," commented the leading Democratic organ of Michigan in March, 1873, and such was the opinion of the opposition to Republicanism which had remained virtually intact since the preceding year. "Slowly but surely all the defeated forces of Retrenchment and Reform are moving towards new and complete organization," it continued, and the defeat in 1872 was considered more propitious for the future than success would have been, as the elements of disaffection were held more closely united by the continued evidences of corruption in the Grant Administration.¹

A call was issued March 3, 1873, for the Democratic and Liberal State conventions to be held at Jackson, March 27th. All persons were invited who were "opposed to the corruption of men in power," and each county was entitled to two delegates for each Representative in the legislature. In pursuance of the system of joint individual action in the previous campaign, the two organizations were to meet simultaneously and the call was signed by both Foster Pratt and N. B. Jones, the state chairmen of the Democratic and Liberal Republican committees respectively. The pro-

¹ *Free Press*, Mar. 6, 1873.

ceedings were entirely harmonious, and I. P. Christiancy was unanimously renominated for Associate Justice of the Supreme Court.

Mr. Christiancy had been a Democrat until the anti-slavery controversy, when he became an active leader in the Free Soil movement, and by successive re-elections he had served in the Supreme Court from its founding, January 1, 1858. The non-partisan character of his politics made him a reliable and favorite candidate of a united opposition. His anti-slavery sentiment of 1848 was no longer a source of Democratic criticism, while his Free Soil sympathies strengthened him with the Republicans who adopted him as their candidate also. The fact that he had so long occupied an office not strictly political, and had remained apart from active or prominent participation in politics made him the most conspicuous man in the state for nomination. He was elected without opposition and his success this year undoubtedly served to make him the first preference of the anti-Chandler combination two years later. Of the six candidates for the two Regencies of the University, the two Republicans won over the Democrats and Temperance candidates by large majorities. The special elections in two judicial districts and one Congressional also resulted in Republican victories.¹

Again the constitution received attention now by attempted revision instead of amendment. There was no particular reason for it at this time. It had, however, become the settled aim of the administration party to obtain change, and they alternately tried amendment and revision. It had likewise become the policy of the Democracy to look with disfavor upon such proceedings, and the people had

¹ *Argus*, Apr. 4, 1873; *Free Press*, Apr. 5; *Mich. Coll.*, vol. xviii, pp. 333-8; *Biog. of Christiancy*, by Justice Graves; *Post and Tribune Life of Chandler*, p. 338.

acquired the habit of rejecting all such proposed alterations. During the legislative session of 1873, the Governor was authorized to appoint a commission of eighteen members, two from each district, to revise the Constitution.¹ The proposed draft would be acted upon by the legislature and if approved, it would then be submitted to the people. The Commission as named by the Governor consisted of twelve Republicans and six Democrats, a proportion fairly representative of the political status of the state, but one which was bound to cause the active opposition of the minority party to the final draft.² Among the most popular members of the Commission were G. V. N. Lothrop—who had been an active supporter of Andrew Johnson—Charles Upson, a member of Congress for several terms, and Sullivan M. Cutcheon, Ex-Speaker of the House of the State Legislature.

The subjects under consideration before this body were chiefly taxation, salaries and method of appointment of circuit judges. The power of taxation—general and local—should be limited, it was urged, rather than increased. The matter of fixing salaries should not, in the light of the "Salary Grab" Act of Congress and a similar one of the State Legislature, ever be given over to the legislature. The Democrats clearly understood this, some of the Republicans did not. Though it was admitted generally by both parties that the remuneration provided in the constitution was entirely inadequate, the increase must be definitely specified in the revised constitution. The present

¹ *Acts*, 1873, p. 573, Joint Res., no. 19, offered Apr. 24; *H. Jour.*, p. 214; *S. Jour.*, p. 1254.

² It met late in August and adjourned the middle of October, remaining in session 51 days. By the act providing for the Commission it must complete its labors on or before Dec. 1. *Argus*, Aug. 15, 1873; *Lansing State Rep.*, Sept. 24.

state of popular feeling would prevent the adoption of a proposal placing the matter in the hands of the legislature, a body which the people did not feel inclined to trust.

The legislation which had occasioned this hostility was the Act of April 24, 1873, which voted additional payment to secretaries, clerks, sergeants-at-arms, firemen and messengers of the legislature, to the amount of several thousand dollars.¹ It was urged that this action was taken in direct violation of Article IV, Section 21, of the constitution, which declared that "The legislature shall not grant nor authorize extra compensation to any public officer, agent or contractor after the service has been rendered or the contract entered into." The Democrats observed that "the legislature of this state has proven an apt scholar in learning the bad tricks of Congress." The Republican organs arraigned the Democrats in the legislature for this piece of legislation, while the latter defended themselves on the grounds that "the majority is by right held responsible for the action of any legislative body."² It was thus natural that the recent acts of the legislature would endanger the salary articles which the Commission might recommend, and lead to the rejection of the revised constitution. Contrary to the advice of members of both parties, the Commission gave the legislature the power to establish the salaries of all state officers, with the result which was generally foreseen.

An innovation was proposed by the Commission, providing for the appointment in place of the election of State and Circuit Judges, but it was here defeated by a strong opposition who pointed to the fortunate results of the elective system in the case of the Supreme Court.

In October, the Commission closed its work of constitu-

¹ *S. Jour.*, p. 1441, Apr. 10, 1873; *Free Press*, Apr. 25.

² *Jackson Cit.*, May 3.

tional revision. Pursuant to the call of Governor Bagley, an extra session of the legislature was convened on Tuesday, March 3, 1874, to consider the constitution as revised the previous autumn. After a thorough discussion of each article, it was approved with some changes by both Houses, and recommended for submission to the people to be voted upon in November.¹

Another matter received the attention of the legislature—that of woman suffrage. This movement had been in progress since the constitutional convention of 1867, and it culminated in a joint resolution proposing an amendment to Section 1, Article 7, relative to the qualifications of electors.² This was to be submitted as a separate article at the same time with the draft of the revised constitution, as the sentiment against woman suffrage would have endangered the constitution.

FORMATION OF MINOR PARTIES

The campaign of 1874 was certainly one of many issues and a complication of many movements. There was some uncertainty concerning the relation of the Democracy to the Reform Republicans, and the matter ended in some ill-feeling and an entirely separate organization of the two, which abrogated the arrangement of two years before. The Grangers had attained some importance the previous year, and both the regular organizations visibly catered to them. The Democrats had the advantage of the Republicans in this respect, and pursued it to extremes. The

¹ *S. Jour. and H. Jour.*, for Extra Session, 1874.

² *Acts*, Extra Session, 1874, pp. 9, 10, Joint Res., no. 2, approved Mar. 23. The *Grand Traverse Herald*, Republican, was probably the strongest advocate of woman's suffrage in Michigan. The Democrats generally opposed it or ignored the question, while the Republican organs were inclined to be more liberal. *Grand Traverse Herald*, Mar. 24.

Greenback party became prominent at this time partly because of the financial panic of the preceding year. The past agitation of the Prohibitionists raised up against them the License or Anti-Prohibition party. There was thus some danger of confusing the less important issues with those of greater consequence—woman suffrage, prohibition, re-election of Chandler, with reform, resumption, centralization and the tariff.

The organization called Patrons of Industry had become prominent in Michigan among the agricultural class by the fall of 1873, when there were one hundred and thirteen local granges organized. When a county was thoroughly organized a grange selected three delegates who formed the "County Council." Among its recognized duties were the arrangement of terms of sale of various commodities with local dealers and the guarantee of the exclusive patronage of the organization. The sale of agricultural implements and other articles at wholesale was also arranged by the state executive committee. By January, 1874, the movement was sufficiently extensive and unified to make possible a state convention which met at Kalamazoo and framed a comprehensive platform highly complimentary to the order. The aims of the order were declared to be the facilitating of social intercourse, the increase of knowledge and intelligence by the discussion of public questions, and the advancement of pecuniary interests through co-operation. The last purpose could be accomplished by buying directly from manufacturers and selling directly to consumers. "As agriculture furnishes the main source of the nation's wealth and greatness, and over one-half of the productions of the country and nearly one-half of the voters," the farmers are entitled to equal privileges, equal taxation and equal justice in the administration of the laws. The platform demanded cheap trans-

portation and urged the legislature to control and regulate the carrying trade of our country and compel all railway companies to adopt equal and uniform rates for passengers and freight.¹

The Grangers were favorable to the elected judiciary, and constitutional regulation of state salaries. They denounced the Credit Mobilier and Salary Act and demanded the repeal of the latter. The Patrons were thus conservative with respect to the minor questions of constitutional revision, and on reform their views coincided with those of the Democracy. Their chief interests were industrial and their platform omitted the important question of currency. Their demand for railway regulation was not now incompatible with the policy of either of the leading parties and their other issues were not strong enough to cause any apprehension of a new division. The great issues of the present campaign were fiscal in nature and the Patrons took no cognizance of this fact. Their organization in Michigan as in the other states was more social and industrial than political, and their function was to influence the old parties in legislation rather than cause a new political formation. Only a party built upon the currency issue could endanger the lines of the old organizations.

The Prohibition party held a state convention July 30th, and nominated an entire state ticket. The *Post* among other Republican papers looked with disfavor upon the persistence of this faction, while the Democracy was openly hostile to it.

This year appeared a new organization founded upon the temperance question—the Anti-Prohibition or State License Party. Prohibition had been a more or less prominent issue since 1868, when a proposed amendment in its favor was rejected by a majority strong enough to encour-

¹ *Mich. as a State*, vol. iv, pp. 149-151; *Free Press*, Jan. 31, 1874.

age the license advocates. A convention of Anti-Prohibitionists met in Detroit, August 12th, with an attendance of 300, including delegates from every district. The resolutions embodied strong arguments for a well-administered state license system, and prominent Republican journals admitted the soundness of some of the views. It was conceded that "doubtless a majority of the people of the state are tired of the experiment of prohibition and would welcome legislation on a practical, not sentimental basis." The convention gave the party a permanent organization by the appointment of a state central committee, and the movement received encouragement from various journals of both parties.¹

THE INDEPENDENT ACTION OF THE REFORMERS

The initial step toward the formation of a new reform party in the state was taken by the opposition members of the legislature in May, 1874. They appointed a committee which issued a call for the "National Reform convention" to meet in Lansing, Thursday, August 6th. The question arises at once concerning the connection, if any, between the Liberal party of 1872 and this new "National Reform Party". The foundations of the former were primarily hostility to Grant, agitation for administrative reform, and the demand of a milder policy in the treatment of the Southern states, during the progress of Reconstruction. The "National Reform Party" of this year was dedicated, as its name implies, to the "restoration of purity and statesmanship to the high places of our state and national administration." As both were built upon the common grounds of reform, especially in so far as national administration is concerned, there appears an obvious simi-

¹ *Adv. and Trib.*, Aug. 14, 1874; *Argus*, Oct. 16.

larity between the two organizations. The fact that the personnel in Michigan was practically the same—at least the leaders—lends additional force to this inference.

On the other hand, if the two parties are formally and officially considered, the conclusion is necessarily quite different. The National Reform Party received an absolutely fresh organization, and was—to all appearances—a new party, with no intimation that it was the unfortunate Liberal organization under a new name. The opposition members of the state legislature who appointed the committee for preliminary deliberation, the committee itself, and the state convention—all three bodies—declared definitely that a new organization had been formed. Formally, then, the National Reform Party in 1874 was decidedly a new one, and entirely independent of the Liberals of two years before. In reality, however, their identical purpose and personnel warrant the view that they were one.

According to the committee, the National Reform convention of August 6th was “to take such steps as may be deemed advisable to secure the organization of a party on a basis of live issues and for the restoration of purity and statesmanship to the high places of our state and national government.” There was no doubt that a new party was anticipated by this call. As late as the last of May there appeared a strong probability that the elements of opposition would unite for the campaign. It was the “Reform” faction who thus first made clear an intention of independent action on their part, and the Democrats were not a little surprised at the call. The Republicans believed this a “feeler” for “finding a platform for the Democrats,” but there was no evidence of connection between the two elements of the opposition. From the general sentiments expressed in the convention and the platform it appears that the Reformers acted somewhat rashly, if not

selfishly, this year, and were instrumental in decreasing the influence which a party effectively representing their views might otherwise have attained.¹ The charge made by some leading Republican journals that "the call for a distinctly Democratic convention killed the Reform movement" could not possibly be true, as the Reformers themselves took the first step to secure separate organization, and the Democrats did the one thing that was left them—ignore the Reform element in their call.

The National Reform convention was not largely attended, and among the delegates were some who had been Reformers in 1870 and Liberals in 1872. The preamble to the resolutions adopted by the convention declared necessary the reform of both of the old parties, and while the Reformers "recognized the honesty and patriotism of a large portion of the Democratic and Republican parties," yet "they could never hope to effect reform by acting with either of them." They enumerated the many evidences of corruption, and declared there was a positive "necessity of independent action". The convention cordially invited to join with them all men of whatever class and vocation regardless of past political views.

The Democrats with good reason were offended and at once looked with disfavor upon the independent action of the Reformers. The alienation of the Democracy seems now, as it did at that time, a grave mistake. It was not the Reformers but the Democrats who had sacrificed themselves in the campaign two years before, and if one of the parties to that coalition now felt unfavorably disposed, it should certainly have been the latter.

The platform demanded a reduction in the number of offices under the national government and a reduction both

¹ *Evening News*, May 26, 1874; *Lansing State Rep.*, May 27, *Argus*, May 29.

of their powers and of their salaries. It favored measures securing free banking, a revenue tariff and an equitable system of taxation. It also recommended legislative regulation of railway fares and the taxation of railway property, and denounced the issuance of free passes to state officials.

The currency resolution was by far the most important, and it was awaited by both parties with great interest. Its essence proved to be a demand for return to a specie basis "as rapidly as shall be consistent with financial prosperity." The Democrats promptly criticised this plank as being non-committal and uncertain, and saw in it a concession to inflationist Republicans. There was widespread disappointment that a convention addressed by Ex-Governor Blair should make such a weak declaration upon a vital issue.¹ The advocates of inflation had withdrawn from the convention, and a decisive declaration in favor of resumption could have been adopted without difficulty, as there was unmistakable evidence that the prevailing preference was in that direction. The plank was obviously designed to satisfy the Greenbackers, but failed to do so.

The Reform convention appointed a state committee which issued a call for a convention, September 9th, to make nominations and appoint Congressional district committees. This meeting adopted resolutions similar to those of August 6th. Col. A. T. McReynolds was appointed chairman *pro tem*, and a full ticket was nominated of which four names were adopted by the Democrats in convention the next day.² A fifth nomination became concurrent by

¹ The chairman was Hon. Eugene Pringle, and Randolph Strickland was a speaker. *Evening News*, Aug. 7, 1874; *Jackson Cit.*, Aug. 10.

² Henry Chamberlain for Governor, George H. House for Sec. of State, Chauncey W. Green for Commissioner of the State Land Office, and Duane Doty, Member of State Board of Education.

the subsequent withdrawal of Col. McReynolds, the candidate for Attorney-General, whose successor was M. V. Montgomery, the corresponding nominee of the Democrats. Five nominations were thus identical, of which four were again original with the minority branch and acceptable to the Democracy. The campaign within the state, so far as it related to the state ticket, thus presented a different form of union from that in 1872. The principal candidates were the same, but the parties worked separately throughout the campaign.

The efforts of the Reform party were a great disappointment to many. The hard-money faction, it was generally thought, should have expressed themselves without such ambiguity and vagueness. "The Democrats have done well in not identifying themselves with the convention," declared the leading Democratic organ, "and while we would have concurred on every point, the Reformers have not rendered a Democratic convention unnecessary, as they have left undone something we can and will do."

The alliance which had earlier been thought possible between the Democracy and Reform party was never effected and the two branches maintained throughout a separate organization. The Democrats were naturally sensitive in this matter, and the leading organs urged the party "to go forward just as if this new party had not been organized, nominate its ticket and announce its principles." They also urged the party "to shun all entangling alliances and let the Reformers cast their vote with the Democracy." They referred to the failure of the Reform minority to carry over the majority in 1872 and declared the former could not now absorb the latter. The defeat at the last election also showed the inadequacy of the "double jointed" organization with simultaneous and separate conventions and separate platforms. The co-operation in this election,

if there were any, must be through mere mutual adoption of individual names—and this was what took place in several instances.

THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

The Republican state central committee met at Jackson, Tuesday, June 9th, and issued a call for the State Convention to meet at Lansing, August 28th. The size of the convention was doubled, as four delegates were allowed each district instead of two. The party was on the defensive, and its platform, like its other campaign efforts, was a vindication of the past policy of the national administration. It declared that the party “offered no apologies,” but “challenged a faithful scrutiny of its record through every vicissitude of war and peace, and the candid judgment of all just men.” The Republicans “saw no reason to surrender the reins of power into the hands of a party whose last public service was to drag the country into civil war—and which made its last effort to regain the confidence of the people under the lead of its life-long enemy in the most brazen, bare-faced, shameless coalition ever known in the history of parties, formed solely and avowedly on the basis of ‘spoils alone’.” The state administration was highly commended for its interest in procuring social legislation.¹

With reference to the negroes, the platform declared that “freedom was bestowed upon them as a war measure

¹ The measures particularly referred to were the establishment of the State Board of Charities and Corrections in 1871 for the reformatory treatment of the insane; the founding of the State Public School for dependent children two years later,—both under Governor Baldwin, and the creation of the State Board of Health under Governor Bagley. During the administration of the latter incumbent the office of Commissioner of Insurance was provided for, and a Bureau of Inspection of Banks was established in the Treasury Department. *Mich. as a State*, vol. iv, pp. 66-9, 106-8.

and in aid of the Union cause, and the electoral function was thrust upon them as a means of protection not only to themselves but to the nation." It was therefore the duty of the country to "protect them in all rights and privileges of their enforced citizenship." "Their ignorance is not their fault," it asserted, "but the legitimate fruit of their former condition." The government "assumed the responsibility for problems resulting from their status when it clothed them with full rights and privileges of citizens." These statements certainly had a more apologetic tone than the dominant party had yet shown with reference to the race problem. The Republicans insisted throughout the campaign that the Northerners were a necessary element in the South to guarantee protection to the negro, and they went so far as to concede that whatever trouble there was occasioned by the presence of the Northerners was due to their "ignorance and inexperience, rather than their fraud and corruption."¹

The resolutions touching the currency were so unsatisfactory that even the *Advertiser and Tribune* considered them vague and non-committal. The *Post*, however, resented the insinuation on the part of the less aggressive Republican journal that the party must have wanted to please the resumptionists without offending the inflationists. The platform declared that while greenbacks and national bank notes were far superior as a circulating medium to any other paper currency existing in the United States—yet resumption of specie payments was demanded "as soon as possible." Banking under a well-guarded national system should be free, and the volume of its issues regulated by the business law of demand.²

¹ *Post*, Sept. 4.

² *Eve. News*, Aug. 29, 1874; *Ann. Cyc.*, 1874.

The old parties were formally, at least, approaching unanimity on the currency question, though the Democrats declared for immediate resumption in much more emphatic terms than the Republicans. In Michigan the former adhered to resumption with fair consistency throughout the period, though they had become classed as a soft-money party in 1870 because they advocated postponement of specie payments until they could be effected "without injury to industrial interests." Whatever disadvantages they suffered from this tendency, however, were equaled and overshadowed by the Republican support of the Inflation Bill defeated by the President the previous April.

Precisely what the attitude of the Republicans towards resumption was in Michigan it is difficult to say. They were undoubtedly divided among themselves and there was radical disagreement among the members in each House of Congress. The state platform was naturally an attempt to avoid offending either element, and there was a consensus of opinion that it was intended to reconcile the antagonism of Chandler and Ferry, the two Michigan Senators, whose views upon this question were diametrically opposed. It was generally thought that had Ferry carried the day, nothing would have prevented the division of the party on the lines of that issue alone. Chandler, Waldron, Willard and William B. Williams were the advocates of immediate resumption, while Ferry, seconded by Hubbell, Conger and Field, defended a paper currency in true greenback fashion.

The views of the Michigan delegation are set forth in the debates from January to March, 1874, on H. R. 1572, a bill to amend the National Currency Act. Chandler's speech of January 20th in opposition to the Inflation Bill became a party tract in Michigan. He began with the often quoted introduction, "We need one thing besides more money, and that is better money," and declared that he had

advocated from the first the earliest possible return to payment in coin. "I believe the time has arrived or very nearly arrived for coming to it," he continued, and "I have not the same timidity in fixing the date that some of my friends have." He believed that the increase of the volume of paper currency was a step in the wrong direction, and thought that January of the succeeding year was unnecessarily remote for resumption.¹

Waldron considered the issue of paper currency by the government "at least a doubtful exercise of power and certainly pernicious in its influence on the business interests of the people." He showed that it was a dangerous characteristic of such issues "that each creates demand for additional issues," and that the legal-tender currency was the obstacle to resumption.² Williams favored gradual retirement and a return to specie payments. He viewed the power to issue legal tender as "essentially a war power, a forced loan upon the creditor class which cannot exist—for the necessity cannot exist—in time of peace."³

Thomas W. Ferry, the leader of the "Paper Money Trinity," maintained that the panic was due to the insufficiency of available currency, while want of elasticity though it intensified the panic was merely incidental. He did not consider a specie basis an indispensable requisite to national prosperity and cited French and English economic history to sustain him. The resumption theory he attributed to capitalists. "The increasing business interests in the country would be crippled by specie payments, since means to facilitate their development would be denied." The mone-

¹ *Globe*, Jan. 20, 1874, pp. 777-8; Mar. 5, p. 2013; Mar. 17, p. 2183; *Post and Tribune Life of Chandler*, pp. 319-336.

² *Globe*, March 30, 1874, p. 2598.

³ *Globe*, Apr. 9, 1874, pp. 2967-8.

tary standard, whatever it may be, was conventional, he asserted. "Labor alone is the true standard of value and its origin is the cost of production." He insisted that "confidence and implicit faith are the basis of utility of any medium of circulation rather than intrinsic value." On January 13th, he was glad to sacrifice all the subsidiary considerations in his resolution in order to win the primary one—the increase of the currency.¹

In the House, Hubbell and Field defended paper currency against the attacks of resumptionists. The former insisted that it was not excessive for the purposes of industry and the industrial demands of the West. Field, of Detroit, was probably the most extreme Michigan member in the House. He boldly asserted that a petition in favor of resumption presented by his colleague, Waldron, of Hillsdale, was unreliable, as "the gentleman had doubtless been imposed upon and deceived." He attributed the periodic crises in England to their standard. "Money is for domestic uses," he further insisted, and "our greenbacks are the people's money, and the best money we ever had." A full legal tender does not require any redemption, he asserted, as nothing is superior to it. "The credit of the nation possesses intrinsic value as well as gold, because it is issued in exchange for labor."²

The vote on the Inflation Bill in the Senate showed that Ferry, Morton and Logan were its chief supporters, and Chandler, Schurz, Sherman and Thurman its strongest opponents. In the House, Waldron and Willard recorded their votes against it, Williams and Burrows were absent or refrained from voting, and the other five voted yea.

¹ *Ibid.*, Dec. 18, 1873, p. 297; Jan. 13, 1874, p. 607; Jan. 14, pp. 640, 708; Mar. 23, p. 2350; Apr. 6, p. 2818.

² *Globe*, Mar. 31, 1874, pp. 2661-5; Mar. 27, pp. 2551-61; Apr. 8, Appx. pp. 211-215.

After the vote of April 22nd, the vote in the Senate showed Ferry and Chandler still persisting in their differences.¹

The Republican party found itself in a most trying position. It could not declare one policy and denounce the other while its own members in Congress defended both with almost an equal vote. With this threatened schism before it, the party was compelled to come before the people with the appearance of a united policy, and the reason for the non-committal plank in the state platform is thus very obvious. The Congressmen were the centers about which the politics of the respective localities were to draw, and the party must, in six of the nine districts, repudiate its own prominent leaders, or tacitly consign the party to a soft-money position by renominating them. The former would have been harsh treatment, inasmuch as the delegates were all strong partisans on other subjects, and the latter would have been very unwise. The only alternative left them was the embarrassing inconsistency of declaring for resumption in the district nominating conventions and at the same time renominating the inflationist members. In fact this was done in five of the six districts represented by men of inflationist tendencies, and the nominations were made in several instances by unanimous vote.² The three anti-inflation Congressmen of the second, third, and fifth districts were renominated and indorsed. In the second district strong influence was exerted in favor of Webster

¹ *Globe*, S. no. 150, Apr. 6, 1874, p. 2835; Apr. 14, p. 3078; Apr. 28, p. 3436. Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, p. 62.

² The five nominations above referred to were Field in the first district, Burrows in the fourth, Begole in the sixth, Conger in the seventh, and Hubbell in the ninth. The declaration in the sixth was similar to the others—"We are in favor of the resumption of specie payments at the earliest possible moment," but in the eighth district, in which Bradley was unanimously renominated, the convention consistently refused to declare in favor of resumption.

Childs, representing the agricultural interests, and a compromise was necessarily entered into with the Granger element. The friends of both were finally satisfied by the withdrawal of Childs from the present contest with the understanding that he should be supported for the Senatorship in opposition to Chandler, and should be chosen President of the Republican state convention. He had a strong following and had been mentioned in connection with the office of Governor or Secretary of State, but he preferred to keep his chances clear for the Senate.

In one instance, however, an explanation was offered for this obvious inconsistency concerning the currency question. There was a strong element in the first district hostile to Field, and the *Post* with its anti-inflation position—following, of course, the views of Chandler—was anxious to make the case clear, and to warn the offender. “On the question of currency,” it declared, “we have strongly differed from Mr. Field during the financial discussion at the last session of Congress. The question has been practically settled by the veto of the President and by financial measures passed just before Congress adjourned. It is an issue of the past and not likely to be revived. If it should again arise, however, the Representatives in Congress from Michigan will be guided by the will of the party and of the people of the state.”¹

THE DEMOCRACY IN 1874

The Democrats watched closely to discover evidences of the indorsement not only of inflation but of the so-called

¹ *Post*, Aug. 23, 1874; Comment in *Free Press*, Aug. 26, and *Argus*, Aug. 28. The main sources for the subject of Congressional politics and nominations have been the following journals for the months of August and September: *Post*, *Adv. and Trib.*, *Eve. News*, *Coldwater Rep.*, *Jackson Cit.*, *Kal. Tel.*, *Lansing State Rep.*, *Battle Creek Journal*, *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, *Grand Traverse Herald*, *Saginaw Rep.*

salary grab. Both Senators from Michigan had consistently opposed the provision relating to the salaries of Congressmen, and only two Representatives had recorded their vote in its favor—one of them being the one Democratic member of the House.¹

Another question involved in the Republican politics which the Democrats attacked this year was that of the assessment of office-holders for party purposes. It was the practice in the Republican party to mail letters to each office-holder with a pointed request for the remittance of a certain percentage of his salary to the treasurer of the state organization. The exact amount was generally already computed and written out. This was certainly an effective arrangement, as the request signed by the state chairman was virtually a demand. The organization and system of assessment for campaign purposes was probably at its best in Michigan, as the party had been almost absolute for the last twenty years. It was a method of which the Democrats could not if they wished avail themselves, as they had practically no incumbents to assess. The re-creation on this subject was probably more bitter than in states where the opposition had some hopes of meeting the majority upon a more equal footing.

There was some doubt early in the year concerning the best issues upon which to build the Democratic platform. Opinions seemed to differ. In some cases the lesser questions obscured the greater, but the main one was generally conceded to be the currency. The recent panic was undoubtedly the cause of the agitation of the money issue by the Democrats particularly, and as early as February they demanded contraction and specie payments. "Greenbacks must be made worth their face value in gold. This can be done," they declared, "by withdrawing a portion

¹ McPherson, 1874, pp. 17, 18, 20.

of them from circulation, ceasing to purchase with them bonds due five, ten, or fifteen years hence, and using the gold accumulating in the Treasury to redeem the overdue and dishonored paper of the government.”¹

The Democratic state central committee issued the call for the convention to be held at Kalamazoo on Thursday, September 10th.² It allowed double the former number of delegates, following the precedent of the Republican party, four from each Representative district and two from each organized county. The call also recommended that the convention arraign the Republicans for their “mal-administration, extravagance and corruption.” The Democrats were to accept the abolition of slavery, it insisted, but resist all attempts to treat the southern states as conquered provinces. The party should declare obedience to the national constitution but tolerate no interference from Washington with municipal affairs.³ The last was home rule, and “this with hard money and a revenue tariff must constitute the main federal issues.” In matters of state administration, the call demanded the revision of tax laws to prevent the accumulation of large balances, the additional security from legislative interference in merely local affairs, and the economical administration of the state

¹ *Argus*, Feb. 13, 1874, “The Money Question.” There were general expressions of delight on Grant’s veto, Apr. 22, of the Senate Finance Bill, no. 617, known as the Inflation Bill.

² Issued in Detroit, July 28, and signed by Foster Pratt.

³ This was aimed against the Interstate Commerce Bill providing for “the appointment of commissioners with powers to establish freights and fares.” It was discussed in the House, March 18, and Willard of Mich. spoke against it as a measure “inexpedient, difficult, and dangerous.” On March 26 it passed the House, Bradley, Waldron, Willard in the opposition, the other six members voting yea. This was not of course a party vote, but indicated difference of opinion among the Republicans. For comment, *Post*, Mar. 27, 1874; *Argus*, Apr. 3.

government. The agitation for tax revision arose from the accumulation of a large amount in the treasury which the treasurer loaned to certain local banks at a lower rate of interest than that which was generally current, and often on poor security. At this time there was a surplus of \$13,600,985, and the Democrats opposed the loan of these state funds with what they considered to be insufficient security, since the Treasurer's bond was too small to protect the state.¹

The convention followed closely the lines laid down by the committee in its call of July 28th. The platform was a long one, and opened by an arraignment of the party in power for "unexampled extravagance and corruption, and unconstitutional and dangerous usurpation of powers not delegated to the federal government." It demanded the "immediate abandonment of all efforts to rule the states for corrupt party purposes by an infamous alliance of carpet-baggers, scalawags and bayonets." It further demanded the immediate repeal of the Salary Act and the Gag Law "by which the party in power seeks to muzzle a free press." With respect to the currency, the Democrats declared for resumption, free banking, and tariff for revenue only. They also demanded that the repeal of the Legal Tender Act take effect not later than July 4, 1876. The management of the state finances was sharply criticised, and the surplus was considered so large that state taxes could be abolished for a year.

Upon the perplexing subject of the liquor traffic the Democrats advocated regulation by constitutional amendment rather than prohibition. They thus secured the support of the German element, and incurred the hostility of the Prohibitionists. When the motion was made for the

¹ *Free Press*, July 29, 1874; *Argus*, July 31; *Treasurer's Report*, fiscal year 1873-4.

adoption of the resolution there was some debate upon the relative merits of prohibition and a well-regulated control of licenses. The latter was preferred by the majority and the resolutions were adopted with but few dissenting votes. At the close of the state convention, Mr. Allison, of Cass county, moved a suspension of the rules to enable him to offer a resolution supporting the proposed constitutional amendment granting woman's suffrage. It was voted down by almost a unanimous vote, and the Democrats thus officially declared against the movement.

There was one declaration in the platform of this convention which reflected the general sentiment within the state not only of the Democrats but also of the Republican majority in the state legislature. It declared that "railway and industrial interests ought to be reciprocal," and "the legislature ought to secure reasonable and uniform rates of freight."

The influence of the Granger element was thus apparent in both parties. The nominations were made with unusual care, as the locality and vocation considerations were of great importance in the appeal to the less frequently represented classes. The Democratic ticket thus became the favorite of the Granger element, especially since Mr. Chamberlain, the gubernatorial nominee, was an agriculturist. Four candidates were taken from the Reformer's ticket, as has been stated, and one originally named by the Democrats was later adopted by them. The ticket was a very strong one, and the platform was certainly unobjectionable.¹

The Congressional nominations were made with greater care, if possible, than the state ticket in order to insure the support of the agricultural class. There was a general

¹ *Free Press*, Sept. 11; *Argus*, Sept. 18. For comment *Eve. News*, Sept. 15.

expectation that a union would be effected between the Democracy and the Reformers in the Congressional nominations and this proved to be the case in the first and fourth districts. Furthermore a strong opposition to the Republican incumbents had grown up in the first, fourth and sixth districts, and the Democratic candidates accordingly found strong support.

THE ELECTIONS OF 1874

The October elections, especially in Ohio, Indiana and Iowa, greatly encouraged the Democrats. In a triumphant address the state chairman declared: "The people of eleven states have now spoken. The popular verdict against corrupt rulers has been rendered."¹

An opportunity so favorable to the Democracy of Michigan had not occurred since the formation of the Republican party. The result was what the Republicans themselves were frank to call "an unprecedented repulse of Republicanism in Michigan." The Republican following fell from 61.84 per cent to 50.46 per cent in the gubernatorial vote, and this change of over 10 per cent of the total vote was the greatest within the period of this study.² It will be remembered that the Reformers had several joint nominations with the Democracy and these commanded a vote similar to that of governor. The tide of opposition ap-

¹ The address was signed by the chairman, Foster Pratt, and the other four members of the Committee. *Argus*, Oct. 16.

Bagley received 111,519, Chamberlain 105,550 and Carpenter, Temperance, 3,937. The Republican candidate won this year by the small majority of 2000, while two years ago it was over 57,000. The votes of Manitou and Presque Isle were not received in time for the count, but swelled the vote for the Republican candidate 92, the Democrat 154. The other state officers received an average vote of 112,000. The Prohibition vote on governor was tripled and rose to 1.78% of the total vote.

peared in the election of 14 members to the state Senate and 47 to the House, reducing the Republican joint majority to 10.¹ The results of the Congressional elections were probably the most important of the year, for the Democrats carried the first, fourth and sixth districts, which had been strongly administration two years before. The Republicans won in the other six districts, but received small majorities.

The vote on the constitution disclosed a stronger opposition to it than mere Democratic hostility, as it was rejected by a vote of 124,039 to 39,285. The separate proposition of woman's suffrage received a somewhat larger vote and a stronger repudiation, the opposition majority approximating three-fourths in each case.²

The result was declared by Republican organs a "re-buke" to their party, but "not a political revolution." It was admitted to be a "purification of the party by ridding it of a number of unworthy leaders over whose downfall few regrets will be felt," except in so far as those who deserved a better fate were "caught in bad company" and rebuked accordingly. "Purged of its elements of weakness the Republican party will emerge all the stronger," declared the *Post*, but "Congress must get out of the paper money business as soon as it can."³

The party was more odious to the Reform and Granger

¹ There were only 18 Republicans in the Upper House, and 53 in the Lower, whereas their membership in the previous legislature was 31 and 94 respectively.

² *Mich. Alm.*, 1875; *Mich. Man.*, 1875, pp. 236-240; *Trib. Alm.*, pp. 86-7; McPherson, 1874, pp. 63, 64. The press material of greatest value was found in the following journals; *Post, Adv. and Trib., Eve. News, Free Press, Jackson Cit., Argus, Hillsdale Standard, Battle Creek Daily Eagle, Kal. Gazette, Kal. Tel., Lansing State Rep., Traverse City Herald, Muskegon News.*

³ *Post*, Nov. 9, 1874.

elements than was the Democracy, while its prohibition sympathies alienated the German element. The administration of state finances by Treasurer Collier elicited harsh criticism and the large surplus with continued taxation embittered many taxpayers who would otherwise have supported the Republican party. It was felt that its tacit sympathy with the woman's suffrage movement had injured the party, but more damaging, it was conceded, was Sumner's "Civil Rights Bill", which was left hanging over the country. "Probably this will prove the final end of attempts at class legislation," asserted the leading Republican organ of the State, with reference to that bill. "But," it continued reassuringly, "the Democratic legislatures will enact so much class legislation that a reaction will occur in favor of the Republicans." Probably the greatest mischief was wrought by the "inflation talk of last winter," it was widely admitted; and this was certainly true. Thus the Republicans in Michigan for the first time in their history had occasion to analyze the many causes that contributed to what seemed to them an overwhelming defeat, and in their adversity they were compelled to be truthful.

The results of the fall election, coupled with the victory of the opposition over Chandler the succeeding January, mark the climax of Democratic influence during this period. In the past the Democracy had suffered from the disadvantages of the war and the Republicans had secured virtually an absolute hold upon the state. In 1870, the Democrats were much encouraged, only to meet utter defeat in the great catastrophe at the next election. In 1874 no alliances were entered into, and the coalition candidates were nominated in separate conventions at different times. A greater tendency to combine would probably have been fortunate, inasmuch as four minor factions existed and

two subordinate tickets. The Anti-Prohibition and Granger elements nominated no tickets, but the latter had great influence with the Democracy. In the Fourth Congressional District the opposing elements united under the suggestive name of Independents, and their candidate, who was a Reform Republican of long standing, was successful.¹ The Independents, Reformers and License Men had many of the features of the Democratic party, while the Prohibitionists could have merged with the Republicans. The era of small parties had now begun and with the approach of the settlement of the great issues of the last twelve years, popular feeling centered about the less important questions and tended to over-emphasize them. The dissension among the Republicans this year on the currency question was a clear forecast of the Greenback party which was to frame its first national platform the next campaign.

THE DEFEAT OF CHANDLER

The Senatorial situation in Michigan in the winter of 1874-75 was often compared by the anti-Chandlerites to that in Wisconsin, Minnesota and Maine, where there were hopes of defeating the three absolute leaders, Carpenter, Ramsey and Hamlin respectively.² One of the earliest expressions of distinct opposition came from the *Advertiser and Tribune*, which recommended the names of the three popular Justices of the Supreme Court as possibilities—Campbell, Cooley and Christiancy. Its denunciation of the caucus system and its demand for Chandler's retirement naturally provoked the resentment of the *Post*, and the

¹ Allen Potter over Julius C. Burrows. The "Independent" movement of this year is not generally distinguished from the Reform and Democratic coalition which occurred in the Congressional nomination.

² "A Trio in Tribulation," *Boston Post*, cited in the *Free Press*, Jan. 1, 1875.

month of November found the two journals in a controversy which brought both sides of the issue clearly before the people.¹ There was a strong movement in favor of Webster Childs, the choice of the Granger element, and this was a part of the arrangement previously mentioned in connection with the Congressional nomination of the second district. The *Tribune* advised the Democrats "to stand ready to elect an anti-Chandler Republican if a real Democrat could not be found." The disaffected Republican minority refused absolutely to support any Democrat, and of the two elements of the opposition, the latter was the more ready to make concessions and accept the conditions imposed upon them by their allies. It was believed by some that it had been Chandler's aim to effect a whole series of re-elections in the state legislature which had been strongly Republican, and this would culminate in his own re-election.²

There was an obvious schism in the Republican party on the grounds of personal attitude towards Chandler, and each side was supported by prominent journals.³ Elab-

¹ The numbers of the *Adv. and Trib.*, for Nov. 10, 13, 27, are of special interest. As early as July there was speculation as to the outcome of the contest and the expression of personal opinions.

² *Chicago Tribune*, Sept. 3, 1874; mentioned in the *Argus*, Sept. 11.

³ A distant observer, the *Boston Post*, remarked that only thirty-six of the one hundred thirty-six party journals of the state supported Chandler. It would be impossible to verify this statement but it was not, at least, improbable. Among the most influential defenders of the Senator were the *Post*, *Lansing State Rep.*, *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, *Kal. Tel.*, *Marshall Statesman*, *Bay City Chronicle*, *Saginaw Valley News*, *Menominee Herald*, *Monroe Commercial*, *Pontiac Gazette*, and *Ionia Sentinel*. His most powerful enemies were the *Free Press*, *Evening News*, *Lansing Journal*, *Argus* and *Grand Rapids Dem.* There was a movement started to establish an opposition Republican paper in Grand Rapids to combat the *Eagle*, and one of the prime movers of this enterprise was Edward P. Ferry, brother of Senator Ferry.

orate plans were laid by the Chandlerites to " whip in the wavering," and after the arrival in Lansing of Judge Edmunds, Chandler's most reliable friend, the program was fully arranged. The lobby was immense. Besides public accommodations private houses were thrown open to the guests invited to visit Lansing for the Senatorial election, and their lodging and traveling expenses were provided for out of the Republican campaign fund. It was claimed that the enemies in the legislature numbered only two individuals, both of whom would shortly be conciliated by threats or by promise of offices. It was also said that Chandler had been strengthened by securing the support of the entire delegation from the Upper Peninsula on the pledge to vote for a measure making that portion a separate state. Yet whatever may have been the external appearance, Chandler's friends were not hopeful.

The Republican Senatorial caucus was planned for Wednesday evening, January 6th, in order to bind as many Republicans as possible before unfavorable news could come from Wisconsin, but it was postponed until a stronger force could be mustered. Chandler arrived that evening, held a reception, and greeted many guests. The next day a conference was held and it was thought best to employ conciliatory means to win over the disaffected. He sent two messengers to Mr. Childs inviting him to call, but the latter refused both times and replied that Chandler " must call on him ". The opposition had not yet agreed upon any candidate, for they were strongly opposed to the caucus system, which had tended to fall into disrepute. They appeared, however, to act in perfect harmony—a fact which caused the Chandlerites much uneasiness.

On Thursday evening, January 7th, the caucus was held, and the votes were distributed as follows: Chandler 52, Webster Childs 3, Bagley and Campbell each one. The

nomination was later made unanimous, but this fact was not significant, for fourteen Republican members refused to participate. Ten days later the Chandlerites held another conference and the opposition declined an invitation to join. The latter met in a separate convention to await the action of the Chandler men, but became tired and adjourned. The regular conference remained in session three hours and was characterized by one present as "an harmonious confusion". They finally appointed a committee to meet the opposition the next day, but this was unavailing. The breach widened and the excitement increased on the part of the regular element, including Chandler himself. He was personally superintending the details of his campaign, and even the *Post* did not favor the active part he took in his own behalf.¹

Tuesday, January 19th, was the day set for the election, and great crowds thronged the capitol and filled the aisles of the chamber. It was to be a protracted suspense, however, as a majority would not be attained until the third day. On the first ballot the House vote was divided among fourteen names, the Senate, ten. It was surprising that the Democrats should have cast such a scattering vote, as it greatly tended to their disadvantage. Chandler received 46 votes, all Republican, and among the last in the list was Christiancy, supported by only two Republicans. Next to Chandler the strongest candidates were George V. N. Lothrop, Henry Chamberlain and Orlando M. Barnes, who received respectively seventeen, twelve, and seven Democratic votes, and Webster Childs, who was supported by four Republicans. In the Senate there was also a large scattering vote, Chandler receiving seventeen votes and Christiancy only two.

¹ *Post*, Jan. 8, 13, 1875.

Another ballot was taken the next day, Wednesday, January 20th, when the joint vote for Chandler was 64, for Lothrop 60, for Christiancy 5, and for Childs 3. Chandler had gained the support of one vote since the first ballot, and now needed but three more to be elected. But on the other hand, the sixty Democratic members of the legislature had now united and given their combined support to Lothrop. They had consistently refused to resort to the caucus plan, and seemed able at last to approach unanimity. Of the fourteen Republicans who bolted the regular caucus which nominated Chandler, seven had turned to his support. Seven, however, remained obstinate and this fact was most encouraging to the Democrats. Chandler had received 64 votes out of a Republican membership in the legislature of 71, and if these persistent opponents of Chandler's could be won over by the Democracy, the victory would be theirs.

Meanwhile the Democrats and anti-Chandler Republicans held secret meetings, and the result of their discussions was the agreement that if a man satisfactory to both parties could be found, they would unite and secure his election. All available candidates were discussed, but the choice was not large. It was the Republican faction which had previously voted for and now proposed Isaac P. Christiancy, and the selection was a fortunate one. On the 21st of January the third ballot was taken and the crowd of eager spectators was greater than before. When the roll was called Adair led off with Christiancy, and the election resulted in Chandler's defeat by a vote of 67 to 40.

Thus on the first ballot Chandler lacked four votes of an election; on the second he lacked only three, but the Democrats had concentrated upon a candidate of their own; and on the third, a coalition was formed between

them and the seven anti-Chandlerites which succeeded in defeating Chandler, to his complete surprise and utter chagrin. He hastened back to Washington without formally taking leave of his friends in Lansing or stopping in Detroit, and his failure to secure a fourth term was probably a more bitter disappointment than repeated defeats had been to Austin Blair.

In his "downfall", the successful opposition could see the passing of an absolute and arbitrary leader whose hostility to amnesty and southern rights and bitterness toward members of a party sympathizing with southern interests had kept alive unfortunate animosities for an unnecessarily long period of time. Furthermore, his defense of centralizing tendencies clearly contrasted with the conservative views of Christianity on the question. Personally he was odious to many because of his violent partisanship, and a tendency toward unnecessarily bitter denunciation of his opponents. His loyalty to the Republican party passed all bounds of conviction, and his want of financial scruples in campaign work was not always exaggerated by the opposition.

This marks the high-tide of Democratic success within the period of this study—or at least of anti-Republican success—as three Representatives and a Senator of this class were among the Michigan delegation. To the Granger-inclined Democrats, it appeared to mark the "beginning of the people's rule and the end of the politicians."¹

¹ The references consulted were *S. Jour.*, 1875, pp. 91, 101; *H. Jour.*, pp. 126, 135-7; *Mich. Coll.*, vol. xxix, pp. 500-1; vol. xxxv, pp. 494, 504; *Post and Tribune Life of Chandler*, pp. 337-9; *Free Press*, *Eve. News*, *Post*, *Adv. and Trib.*, *Lansing State Rep.*, and *Argus* for the closing months of 1874, and especially January 1 to 25, 1875.

CHAPTER VII

THE POLITICS OF 1876 AND THE RESTORATION OF REPUBLICANISM IN MICHIGAN

MICHIGAN AND FEDERAL POLITICS OF 1875

THE issues which were most generally discussed in Michigan as elsewhere in 1875 and 1876 were reform, resumption, and the completion of reconstruction legislation as exemplified in the Force Bill and Civil Rights Act. The Democrats arraigned the administration party for "profligacy in every department of public affairs, extraordinary public frauds and crimes in the District of Columbia, and the attempt to foist General Grant upon the country a third time."¹ The Republicans themselves emphasized reform in their call, March, 1876, for the state nominating convention.² They made few attempts at apology, and boldly eulogized the administration.

The resumption of specie payments was always one of Chandler's favorite policies. On December 22, 1874, the Resumption Bill passed the Senate and both he and Ferry gave it their favorable vote. January 7th it passed the House, and six of the nine Michigan members voted in the affirmative.³ This measure was unsatisfactory to certain

¹ *Free Press*, Oct. 22, 1875.

² *Cf. infra*, p. 189.

³ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 69-73. The yeas were Begole, Bradley, Burrows, Waldron, Williams, Willard. Moses T. Field voted nay, Conger refrained from voting at all, and Hubbell was absent from Washington. *Congressional Record*, pp. 208, 319, 459.

individuals in both parties, who insisted that resumption, though four years distant, was premature.¹

The last months of the Forty-third Congress saw not only the solution of the currency problem, but the close of legislation upon the subject of reconstruction. The Force Bill proposed to give the President the power to suspend the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus* in Louisiana, Arkansas, Mississippi and Alabama for "two years and from thence until the end of the next session of Congress thereafter."² The House debates show the opposition of one Michigan Representative, George Willard, to the policy of "despotism in the South." He deprecated "any and all legislative action which should result in still further inflaming the public mind."³ "Conditions a year ago were far less disturbed than now," he observed, "due to partisan manoeuvres in two of the southern states and the utterly reprehensible conduct of certain unlawful combinations." He advocated a policy of reconciliation in place of coercive legislation, and his objections to the bill were based upon the constitution. "The suspension of the privilege of the writ of *habeas corpus*," he insisted, "was conceded by the constitution only in case of rebellion or invasion, and that either of these contingencies now exists, no man will pretend." Furthermore, he declared it impossible to frame a federal law that should not apply alike to all states. Lastly, he believed that further coercive federal legislation for the South was not only destructive of material prosperity, but tended to the continued stagnation of business and the depression of industrial activity throughout the country.

¹ *Palladium*, Oct. 8, Nov. 19, 1875.

² Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 89-90.

³ *Cong. Record*, H. R. no. 4745, Feb. 26, 27, 1875, pp. 1836-9, 1935; Mar. 1, 2, pp. 1940, 2035.

Of the Michigan delegation Julius C. Burrows was the most ardent defender of the bill and he declared this to be the only way to secure peace.¹ The House voted February 27, 1875, and Willard alone of the Michigan delegation appeared against it. The Democrats in the state expressed great satisfaction that "one Michigan Congressman cut loose from the extremists."² The Republican sentiment within the state was not unanimously in sympathy with the bill and the more liberal journals rejoiced when the Senate failed to take action upon the measure.

The Civil Rights Act was the outcome of a bill presented as a memorial to Charles Sumner, and provided that negroes be accorded equal rights in inns, public schools, public conveyances and theatres or other places of amusement, and that they be not disqualified for service on juries.³ Probably the most ardent defender of this measure also was Julius C. Burrows, who claimed to believe that "this enactment was dictated by the highest considerations of public policy, and the simplest demands of individual justice." A system of separate education would, he declared, incur double expense and tend to foster race prejudice and hostility. On February 4, 1875, the bill passed the House and every Michigan member voted in the affirmative.⁴

To the Democrats, the bill appeared to be a device by which the leaders of the Republican party could stir up discord between the blacks and the whites of the South, in order that more data could be obtained for use in the coming campaign. Some thought during the pending of

¹ *Cong. Record*, Feb. 27, 1875, p. 1923-5.

² *Free Press*, Feb. 28, 1875. The friends of the bill were the *Post*, *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, and *Lansing State Rep.* The *Adv. and Trib.*, *Jackson Cit.* and *Kal. Tel.* were far less enthusiastic.

³ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 90-91.

⁴ *Cong. Record*, H. R. no. 796, Feb. 4, 1875, pp. 999-1011.

the bill that the Senate would pass it, notwithstanding the lateness of the session and the exigencies which might force its abandonment.¹ This anticipation proved to be well founded, for the Senate passed the House Bill 38 to 26, with Chandler and Ferry both voting in the affirmative. On the first of March, it received the approval of the President.²

The spring elections were now approaching, and early in March occurred the state conventions, none of which framed resolutions. The Democrats met in Jackson, March 2nd, and made nominations which were adopted by the "Reformers" who convened the next day in Lansing. On March 3rd, the Republicans met in Jackson, indorsed Benjamin F. Graves for Justice of the State Supreme Court, and named Byron M. Cutcheon and Samuel L. Walker for Regents of the University. The candidates of the Democrats and Reformers were strong ones, and as politics were usually less rampant in the spring elections than in the fall campaigns, the Republicans did not win with a great margin.³ It was said that the Democracy attempted to win over Austin Blair this spring by choosing him a delegate to their convention, but as he failed to appear, the alliance was not yet effected.

The years 1875 and 1876 saw not only the culmination of radical reconstruction within the southern states and the attendant negro rule, but also its final overthrow by the

¹ *Free Press*, Feb. 7, 1875.

² *Cong. Record*, Feb. 27, 1875, p. 1870; Mar. 1, p. 2013; *Free Press*, Mar. 3, 4.

³ The nominations of the Democracy and Reformers included Benjamin F. Graves for Justice of the State Supreme Court, and Samuel Douglass and Peter White for Regents of the University. For successor to the vacancy of Isaac P. Christiancy in the State Supreme Court, Isaac Marsten, candidate of the Republicans, defeated Lyman D. Morris, the Democratic nominee. *Free Press, Post*, Mar. 3, 1875.

establishment of white supremacy or "home rule". In Alabama the Democrats had succeeded in 1874, and the next year a new constitution was adopted.¹ Arkansas had received a new constitution in 1874, and set the machinery of state government in motion. Early the succeeding year President Grant was thwarted in his plans of intervention by the adoption of the resolution of non-interference framed by the House committee under the chairmanship of Luke P. Poland. This resolution declared that "in the judgment of this House no interference with the existing government in Arkansas by any department of the Government of the United States is advisable."² The Republican opinion in Michigan with reference to Arkansas was divided. There were some members who could always be depended upon to defend Grant, and after Poland's resolution was adopted, they very naturally felt that "political chaos and rebel supremacy would become the order of the day."³

Louisiana had been suffering under a corrupt government maintained by federal authorities, and the approaching election tended to aggravate the difficulties. The Colfax and Coushatta massacres which had occurred in 1873 and 1874 continued to furnish the Republicans grounds for agitation, while the fraud practised by the returning board after election of members of the legislature, and the expulsion of five Democratic members from the legislature early in 1875 afforded the Democrats ample subject-matter for bitter invective.⁴

They were most deeply incensed, however, by the mes-

¹ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 83-4.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 86-88.

³ *Post*, Mar. 8, 1875.

⁴ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 112-115.

sage of Sheridan, who had been sent by the President to New Orleans to investigate the actual conditions there, and to assume military command. On January 5th he sent his first telegram in which he characterized certain persons in New Orleans as "banditti", and in a second message, he recommended the "trial of the ring-leaders of the armed White Leagues".¹ The President imposed far greater confidence in Sheridan than in Schurz and others with more generous views. The liberal report of Foster, Phelps and Potter, three Representatives sent to investigate affairs in New Orleans, was made public early in 1875, and highly pleased the Democracy and less radical Republicans. A second favorable report was made a little later by Hoar, Wheeler and Frye, which proved that many of the Republican campaign charges were fabrications. Upon these revelations the Democrats rejoiced openly.

The Republicans in Michigan apparently were not seriously divided in their views on the policy of intervention. The indignation which was expressed by members of the party in other states was not general in Michigan, but was rather manifested by the Democracy. The supporters of Grant and of Chandler in Michigan invariably defended the policy of federal intervention and, while the second faction was less radical, it also tended to side with the administration rather than make concessions to the Democracy. The Independent and Democratic Journals, on the other hand, expressed bitterness and disgust at the desire of the Republicans to make political capital for the next election out of the disorders in Louisiana.²

In Mississippi the process of Africanization was complete in 1873 and corruption and extravagance were prevā-

¹ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 119-122.

² *Eve. News*, Mar. 11; *Free Press*, May 13, 1874.

lent in their worst forms. In the midst of such conditions Lucius Q. C. Lamar delivered a eulogy on Charles Sumner in Congress, April 27, 1874, and presented the southern point of view in such a way as to appeal to the sentiment of the North.¹ There were a few Republicans of the milder type in Michigan who responded sufficiently to declare that "under the existing conditions in Mississippi, 'it was only a great spirit who could speak as Lamar did of Sumner,' and it was hoped that 'perhaps the Northern point of view would be influenced somewhat by sentiment in the last resort.'"² The Democrats at once took occasion to draw an apt comparison.

What would Chandler take to speak in so impartial a fashion of Lamar, for instance, or any of the leading contemporary spirits of the South, as Lamar did of Sumner? Isn't it probable that he would have indulged in unpleasant personalities which would have overshadowed the broader unselfishness manifested by the Mississippian?³

In December the misgovernment and exorbitant taxation, particularly in Warren County, led to a riot at Vicksburg and the re-establishment of combined negro and carpet-bag government under the protection of federal troops. Another Vicksburg conflict and riots at Yazoo City in the fall of 1875 were incidental to the preparations of both parties for the election on November 2nd, and when Governor Ames asked for federal troops they were denied him—much to the pleasure of the Democrats and the more liberal Republicans. The radical element in Michigan attributed all the blame to the whites and re-

¹ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 100-102.

² *Adv. and Trib.*, April 29; *Jackson Daily Cit.*, Apr. 30, 1874.

³ *Free Press*, Apr. 30, 1874.

fused absolutely to consider their grievances. "The sooner the White Leaguers learn to respect a legitimate government of the majority," said a leading radical organ, "the better it will be for them."¹ The liberal element admitted that the experiences were most trying, but declared the only remedy to be prompt and absolute submission of the whites.² The differences between the two views was one of intensity, rather than principle.

By a sweeping victory at the polls November 2, 1875, the Democrats won the state ticket in Mississippi, most of the local offices, a large majority of the legislature, and four out of six members to Congress.³ Mississippi was now redeemed from negro rule; in December the House of Representatives admitted the Mississippi members, but not until March, 1877, was L. Q. C. Lamar admitted to the Senate. The radical element throughout Michigan declared that only fraud and violence could accomplish this result, and they would have been pleased to see the President overturn the new system.⁴ The liberal members agreed that illegitimate means had been employed by the Democracy, but refused to advocate interference, and the Democrats expressed unbounded joy.⁵

South Carolina had suffered from the corruption and extravagance of negro-carpet-bag rule during the six years, 1868-1874. In the last named year, Daniel H. Chamberlain was elected Governor, and though a Republican and native of Massachusetts, his administration was absolutely impartial. He was sustained by Republicans in Michigan of all shades of opinion, and the Democrats unhesitatingly

¹ *Lansing State Rep.*, Sept. 12; Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 103-4, 130-2.

² *Adv. and Trib.*, Oct. 19, 1874; *Jackson Daily Cit.*, Nov. 2.

³ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 137-9.

⁴ *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, Nov. 5, 1875.

⁵ *Adv. and Trib.*, Nov. 4; *Eve. News*, Nov. 6.

declared him "a rare individual among the heterogeneous mass of office-seeking invaders of the South."¹

During the period embraced in this brief résumé the main subject of politics in Michigan as elsewhere was the outcome of reconstruction in the several southern states. The Republican party clearly presented two elements—radical and liberal—of which the former tended to dominate the latter in Michigan and it is extremely improbable that the policy of the administration alienated a single member from the Republican party in Michigan.

During the last half of December, 1875, and January of 1876, there was considerable discussion of the Universal Amnesty bill, introduced into the House of Representatives by Samuel J. Randall. It provided for the removal of all disabilities remaining under the Fourteenth Amendment, and Blaine, who had earlier favored a similar measure, now excepted Jefferson Davis, and took occasion to deliver a bitter invective against Davis and the treatment of Northern prisoners.² He declared that the ex-Confederates swept into Congress by the Democratic victories of 1874 were a source of danger, and he sought to revive the war issues and the war spirit as completely as possible. This was clearly understood by the Democrats as an attempt to defend and justify the rigid policy of the administration in the South and to reinstate the earlier war issues in the campaign of 1876.³ Blaine's conduct was inexplicable on any other grounds. The Republicans rallied loyally to his support, and a representative organ declared that "while there may be some differences in opinion among Republicans as to the wisdom of omitting Jeff. Davis from an

¹ *Kal. Gazette*, Jan. 30, 1875; Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 161-7.

² Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 179-80. The Amnesty Bill did not receive a two-thirds vote, and thus failed to pass the House.

³ *Free Press*, Feb. 4, 1876.

act of general amnesty, yet the party everywhere insists that rebel leaders shall seek their pardon before it is granted.”¹ Again, it observed that “amnesty is parallel to the pardoning power, and its exercise must be guided by discretion, since it is different now, with a Democratic House, from what it was in the Forty-third Congress where the Republicans constituted the majority.”²

MICHIGAN AND THE REPUBLICAN PRESIDENTIAL TICKET

This year each of the two leading parties met twice in state convention, once for the appointment of delegates to the national convention, and again for the nomination of a state ticket. As early as January, the call was issued for the first Republican convention. The selection of Grand Rapids for the meeting was a concession to the west and northwest portions of the state, whose majorities were large and reliable, and who asked the favor with much earnestness.³ The invitation to join the party was extended to “all in favor of the prosecution and punishment of all official dishonesty, and of the economic administration of the government by honest, faithful, capable officers.”⁴ The element of reform was thus a prominent feature of the Republican program, and the responsible organs of the party rarely attempted to defend the scandals of the administration.

As the time approached for the nominating convention, the problem of presidential possibilities continued puzzling. “In other presidential elections, Michigan Republicans had a presidential candidate ready, but this year, they have none,” remarked a reliable party journal.⁵ On May 10th,

¹ *Post*, Jan. 15.

² *Post*, Jan. 18.

³ *Adv. and Trib.*, Feb. 2, 1876.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Jan. 15.

⁵ *Ibid.*, Apr. 25.

the convention met and among the prominent Republicans present were Governor Bagley, Senator Ferry, and Zachariah Chandler. The delegates elected to Cincinnati, of whom William A. Howard was one, reflected the uncertain attitude of their party, and were far from agreement in their choice of presidential candidate. Certain prominent journals gave out a division in favor of Blaine over Bristow by a proportion of 18 to 4. Others believed that the former had but 11 supporters, the latter 7, Hayes 3, Morton one. It was well known when the delegates were elected that a small majority favored Blaine, while those who supported Bristow were not very firm.¹ The party leaders themselves within the state did not agree in their preferences. Chandler insisted upon Blaine, even as late as Thursday, June 15th.² Governor Bagley favored Hayes from an early date, and William A. Howard preferred Morton. As a result, the delegates were uninstructed and thus were free to exercise their individual preferences.

The National Republican Convention met in Cincinnati, June 14th. On the previous day the Michigan delegation assembled, and a few of the members representing the interests of the *Post* desired to have Chandler included in the national ticket, but he did not encourage it and his name was dropped after the first test ballot. When the first test vote for President was taken by the Michigan delegation at 11.30 on the morning of June 13th, Bristow received 11, Blaine 6, Hayes 3, and Chandler 1. Howard, who had previously preferred Morton, came over to Hayes' support in time to cast one of the three votes on this ballot. On the second test vote the Michigan name disappeared,

¹ *Adv. and Trib.*, May 10, 27, 1876; *Free Press*, May 11, 13.

² On June 15 he telegraphed Eugene Hale at Cincinnati: "The eyes of the country are upon the Michigan delegation. They must vote for Blaine."

Blaine led with Hayes second, and Bristow received but one vote. The friends of the last complained that Michigan had been instrumental in defeating him as they believed that, had the delegation held together for him, he would have been nominated. The steady accessions to his support at first indicated this result, but his votes were lost to Hayes.¹

The Michigan delegation with but one exception had agreed before going into the convention upon Hayes as second choice. When Blaine took the lead, it was known that if the fifth ballot were not decisive, Connecticut would throw her vote for Hayes. To take the first step in what promised to be a successful movement, the Michigan men decided to come out for Hayes, themselves, on the fifth. In the first four ballots of the Michigan members, Bristow had led, Blaine followed, with Hayes a close third. William A. Howard, the Chairman of the Michigan delegation, had already stepped into the aisle to state the vote of the fifth ballot, when the one persistent Blaine supporter yielded, and the unanimous voice of the state was declared for Hayes. Referring to him, Howard declared, "there is a man in this section who has beaten in succession three Democratic candidates for President in his own state," and he wished to "give him a chance to beat another Democratic candidate for the Presidency in the broader field of the United States."²

¹ *Adv. and Trib.*, June 13, 14; *Eve. News*, June 17.

² Official proceedings of the National Republican Convention, pp. 250, 305, 323, 330, 345, 370, 371. Numbers of the *Eve. News*, *Adv. and Trib.*, *Post*, *Lansing State Rep.*, and *Argus* for June. The ballots of the Michigan delegation were as follows:

Ballot	Bristow	Hayes	Blaine	Conkling
1	9	4	8	1
2	9	4	8	1
3	10	4	8	
4	11	5	6	
5, 6, 7,		22		

The Republican organs were pleased to believe that Michigan's action had changed the trend of the votes and secured the nomination of Hayes. It undoubtedly caused the concentration of scattering votes to some extent, and however decisive the influence of the Michigan delegation may have been, the matter was a subject of much self-praise on the part of Republican organs.¹ After the convention there were genuine regrets expressed for Blaine's defeat and it was hoped by some Republicans that "he might grace a cabinet position the next fall." The Democrats felt that "Blaine, the favorite candidate of the Republicans, had been slaughtered for Hayes, who was himself a strong candidate."² The election of Chandler by the national convention to the chairmanship of the national Republican committee and the executive committee was effectively exploited by the Democrats on the ground that the party indorsed the notorious system of extortionate campaign assessments.³ They also foresaw the possibility of an arbitrary and unscrupulous management of the campaign this year, for the political methods of Chandler were well known to everybody.

STATE POLITICS OF THE REPUBLICAN PARTY

The personal politics of 1876 were unusually interesting, and the crossplans of several of the leaders with reference to the senatorship greatly complicated the Republican state campaign. There was a strong movement afoot for

¹ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 206-212. The persons chiefly responsible for the solid vote were Dr. Rynd of Adrian, and W. G. Thompson and Dr. Kiefer of Detroit.

² *Adv. and Trib.*, June 19. Also *Marshall Statesman*, June 29; *Benton Harbor Times*, June 30.

³ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, p. 223; Haworth, *The Hayes-Tilden Disputed Election of 1876*, p. 42; *Free Press*, June 15.

William A. Howard's candidacy for governor, and this apparently originated in Washington, D. C. As Mr. Howard was at this time sixty-three years of age and too infirm to assume the responsibilities of that office, the movement at first caused much uncertainty and consternation. It was well known that Chandler aspired to return to the Senate, and the earliest time at which this could be accomplished was on the expiration of Ferry's term in March of 1877. Probably the strongest rival besides the incumbent himself would have been William A. Howard, and the purpose was soon understood to be the safe disposition of the latter who could not then oppose Chandler in the contest. This would have occasioned a break between Chandler and Ferry, which many believed would never occur, as they had always been congenial save on the currency question. Besides completely disposing of Howard, the success of this scheme would have crippled Ferry for the senatorship. The western portion of the state would be satisfied—or at least appeased—by supplying an incumbent for the gubernatorial office, and the selection of a Senator from the central or western quarter would not be considered so imperative. The suspicion that there were designs upon Ferry's seat in the Senate became strengthened by the proposal to have Ferry's name brought before the Cincinnati convention with reference to the Vice-Presidency. The Senator did not decline absolutely but it was clear that his preference was to remain in his present position.

Another solution of the Howard problem was volunteered after Chandler's denial of the imputed senatorial designs on his part. It was said that Governor Bagley aspired to Ferry's place and thought it advisable to forego a re-election in order to be free for the Senate. Whatever were the impelling motives for this agitation, it was gen-

erally suspected that Howard was the candidate of the "Chandler Ring," and the position of Charles M. Crosswell, the "People's Candidate", was strengthened. The movement did not arouse the enthusiasm expected and Howard himself was not in favor of it.

The state Republican convention to nominate the state ticket was held at Lansing, August 3rd. The platform which it adopted was exclusively a eulogy of the party and its candidates, and contained no declaration on the tariff or currency. The renomination of Charles M. Crosswell for governor and successor of Charles Bagley was acclaimed unanimously without the formality of a ballot. He had been a State Senator from 1862 to 1868, Representative from 1872 to 1874, and president of the constitutional convention of 1867. His abilities as a parliamentarian were a potent factor in his popularity as well as his interests in all charitable and penal reforms. The other names on the ticket were not among the best known in the state, and the Democrats declared that several were compromises with the Granger element.¹

THE DEMOCRACY

The Democrats of the state were no nearer unanimity in the matter of presidential candidate than were the Republicans. There was early mention of William Allen, General Hancock, Judge David Davis, and Charles Francis Adams, while Tilden and Hendricks were naturally the leading preferences. The hard-money element rebelled at William Allen, and Davis and Adams were not considered sufficiently partisan. It was remarked that enough experi-

¹ The personal politics of the time and the state convention are dealt with most fully in the *Post, Adv. and Trib.* and *Eve. News*, for June, July and August. Most of the discussion took place after the first state convention when the main interest of the party was the selection of state and Congressional candidates.

menting had been done in 1872 with candidates with a history not thoroughly Democratic.¹

The state Democratic convention to choose delegates to the national convention met in Lansing, May 24th, with William L. Webber as temporary chairman, and it was declared the largest and most enthusiastic in fifteen years. Of the twenty-two delegates elected, at least two-thirds were known to favor Tilden, and by some it was thought that eighteen would vote for him. Their first trial ballot taken at St. Louis, on Wednesday evening, June 27th, the day before the national convention opened, disclosed a vote of 14 for Tilden, 6 for Hendricks, and 2 for Seymour. There was great disappointment over the small vote for Tilden and a dissension among the members from Michigan caused some alarm. Mr. M. I. Mills had been chosen delegate over Mr. Wells on the understanding that the former would support Tilden, but being disappointed in not receiving the chairmanship of the delegation, he wasted his vote for Seymour. When the first ballot of the convention was taken, the disaffection had disappeared and the two Seymour votes were turned over to Hendricks.² On the second ballot Tilden received all but the three votes of Blair, Burrows and Chamberlain, who persisted in supporting Hendricks.³ The completed ticket, Tilden and Hendricks, met with the general approval of the Democracy within the state.

Besides the choice of delegates the Lansing convention of May 24th had other important business before it. A struggle had been in progress for some time between fac-

¹ *Argus*, Apr. 28, 1876.

² The eight votes for Hendricks were cast by Austin Blair, Bower, Burrows, Chamberlain, Mills, Shoemaker, Stimson and Turner.

³ *Official Proceedings of the National Democratic Convention, 1876*, pp. 144, 146.

tions of the party over the currency question. Great apprehension was expressed by hard-money advocates with reference to possible unwise action on the part of the state convention, and warnings were uttered against any anti-resumption resolutions, or declarations which "could be tortured into nullifying any of the old issues settled by the war."¹ The proceedings of the convention clearly exhibited the differences within the party. Two reports were presented from the committee on resolutions. That of the majority embodied twelve resolutions dealing mostly with general party principles and justifying tariff on grounds of revenue only. The minority report declared that "Sixteen years of Republican rule has entailed upon the country vast indebtedness, national and domestic," and denounced all measures "making the payment of indebtedness more burdensome." The Resumption Act was declared a "sharp legislative device in the unwarrantable interest of the creditor class, calculated to enrich the few and sacrifice the best interests of the many." The minority demanded its repeal and that of the Act of 1873 demonetizing silver. After an extended debate the majority report was adopted with the exception of the tariff resolution, which was laid on the table. The lines were obviously drawn on the currency question and the vote stood 157 to 70 in favor of hard money. A large number of delegates had left the convention when the vote was taken but all seemed satisfied with the work.

The Democracy thus officially repudiated the anti-resumption tendencies of a minority of its members, and it was certain that at least a majority of the delegates chosen to the St. Louis Convention hoped for the nomination of the hard-money candidate. The currency issue was, how-

¹ Speech of Hon. W. P. Wells of Detroit before the State Convention, *Argus*, June 2.

ever, a delicate matter and was cautiously handled by the leaders throughout the campaign. From the omission of positive declarations in its platform, it was evident that a negative policy was to be pursued by the Democracy, and tactful arrangements were made for the state nominating convention in August.

It might be questioned whether the Democrats of Michigan were traditionally a hard-money or a soft-money party. They had proudly stood forth in 1874 and presented a united opposition to the soft-money tendency which threatened to cause a schism in the Republican party. The *Grand Rapids Democrat*, one of the strongest advocates of paper money, considered the hard-money tendency of the Michigan Democracy in 1874 "a mistake and an exception."¹ The fact that a large minority of the party two years before preferred a permanent paper currency gives some support to this declaration. Furthermore, as the Greenbackers united with the Democrats in three names on the state tickets this year, the two parties obviously had something in common. It is safe, however, to assert that the Democracy in Michigan was less disposed to favor paper currency than in many other states during this period.

The Democratic state central committee met in Detroit, June 7th, and devised an elaborate plan of organizing political clubs in every town and city. The committee was composed of younger men than dominated the other party, and it was urged that this class be introduced into all committees from the local to the Congressional. Secret aid was promised to the Prohibitionists in order to draw heavily from the Republicans. The greenback question was to be carried into the western Congressional conventions, but strictly excluded from the State Convention. This omission, it was thought, could be partially compensated

¹ Apr. 20.

for in the adoption of a series of reform resolutions. A compromise would be made with Henry Chamberlain, the Greenback candidate for Governor, who would be requested to withdraw from the candidacy for governorship and accept the nomination for Congress on a Greenback platform. His friends believed he could carry his district in this way as it was inclined in that direction.¹

The regular state convention for the nomination of a state ticket met in Detroit, August 9th. The platform was drawn up along the lines indicated by the state central committee, and indorsed the previous state and national resolutions. William J. Webber, who had been chairman of the Michigan delegation to St. Louis, was nominated by Peter White for governor. He was the leader of the Anti-Chandler forces in the state legislature of 1875, and was considered a strong candidate. Three of the names on the state ticket were later adopted by the Greenback party, and being joint nominations they received stronger support than the other candidates.² Strangely enough, Austin Blair, once a strong Republican, had become by this time fully in sympathy with the Democratic party of the state, and was chosen elector-at-large by the side of G. V. N. Lothrop, who had never been allied with the Republican party. This event is the last stage in the progress of Blair's political career. He had served as the strongly Republican War Governor, 1860-1864, he had been gubernatorial candidate of the combined Reform and Democratic parties in 1872, and was now chosen an elector-at-large by the Democracy in 1876.

THE GREENBACK PARTY

The tendency in Michigan to favor cheap currency had

¹ *Eve. News*, June 8.

² *Free Press*, Aug. 10, 11.

been shunned by the Democracy in 1874, and after almost causing a schism in the Republican party it was finally overcome by the hard-money majority led by Chandler and Jacob M. Howard. The Greenback faction, however, gained strength during 1875, and by February of the succeeding year it was evident that they had determined to enter upon the presidential campaign as a separate and independent party with their own candidates and platform.¹ Early in February, the Greenbackers of the various states called a National Convention to meet in Indianapolis, May 17th, and already in January and February, state conventions had been held in Indiana and Illinois. The Republicans in Michigan were confident that the "Independents," as the Greenbackers called themselves, could not carry a single state, and that there was no danger that they would throw the election into the House. "If the Democratic National Convention should nominate a real inflationist like Allen of Ohio," the *Advertiser and Tribune* declared, "the Greenback faction would be of hardly greater account in the election of 1876 than were the straight Democrats in 1872. But, should both parties defend hard money, the new movement would probably develop somewhat such strength as did the Free Soilers in 1848 and 1852," the journal continued, "and seriously impair the political situation in Michigan as well as in Indiana, Illinois, and Ohio."² It was thought far better if they separated from the two main parties than if they remained with them, as their influence in the latter case was sure to be disastrous.³

The Greenbackers this year did organize as a separate party and they held a preliminary convention in Jackson,

¹ *Adv. and Trib.*, Feb. 4, 1876.

² Feb. 21.

³ *Ibid.*, Apr. 5.

May 3rd.¹ This body framed a platform which demanded the unconditional repeal of the Resumption Act, and declared it "the duty of Congress to so regulate the volume of currency that the rate of interest shall never be greater than the increase of wealth by productive labor." It defended the "efforts of the laboring class to improve their condition" against the charges that they were "communist and incendiary," and demanded the reservation of the public lands for actual settlers.

On August the 29th the Greenbackers held their state nominating convention. They named Levi Sparks for governor and adopted the Democratic nominations for lieutenant-governor, auditor-general, and state treasurer. They also made independent nomination in the first, second, third and seventh Congressional districts, and in the fourth, fifth and ninth they accepted the Democratic candidates. In the two other districts no action was taken.²

There was a very friendly relationship existing between the Democratic and Greenback parties during this campaign, and the Republicans intimated that it was not an unselfish one. The Democracy, it was said, hoped to win through the Greenback party, by inducing all the Republicans possible to vote the Greenback ticket, and all the Greenbackers possible to vote the straight Democratic ticket. In this way, the new party became a convenient medium through which the Republican party could be weakened and the Democracy reinforced by a judicious distribution of dubious voters.³ To what extent this plan was worked by the managers of the state Democracy can-

¹ *Free Press*, May 5; *Palladium*, May 12; *Ann. Cyc.*, pp. 551-4. The *Niles Mirror* and *Battle Creek Journal* were Greenback sheets but no files of them for this period have been available to me.

² *Free Press*, Aug. 30.

³ *Post*, Oct. 1, 27, 1876; *Lansing State Rep.*, Nov. 3.

not be known, but it is very probable that the Republicans had some grounds for their suspicion.

In addition to the three parties in Michigan above mentioned the Prohibitionists revived and rallied from their successive defeats at the polls. They held their state convention in Detroit, March 22nd, and chose a state ticket headed by A. Williams for governor.¹ Their platform demanded with some bitterness "the restoration of prohibition" in place of legislative regulation of license for the sale of liquors.

THE ELECTION OF 1876

The campaign was waged in Michigan principally upon the currency question. It was the favorite charge of the Democrats that their opponents had given the country the Greenback currency, while the Republicans replied with a long list of charges of which the following are typical. The Democrats

at first encouraged states rights, and thus secession and war; when in power they refused to take steps against disruption; they showed sympathy with the rebellion, and when the victory was near at hand, they declared in National Convention the war to be a failure; since the war, they obstructed a peaceful readjustment, and opposed in Congress and the several state legislatures the last three amendments; they condoned the outrages of the whites against the negroes in the South,

and in general, were said to "contain the worst elements of society."² Meantime, election approached. The expectations of both parties before the election seemed very

¹ In the first five districts the Prohibitionists later made nominations to Congress.

² *Post*, Sept. 22, 1876, copying from the *Republican Magazine* edited by the radical element in Michigan. Unfortunately no copies have been available.

conservative. The Republicans repeatedly assured themselves that the Democratic triumph of 1874 was "temporary and exceptional". However, they predicted that there was no reason for either party to expect "a tidal wave bringing them a great majority."¹

The prophecy was not a false one. In both the presidential and the state elections, the Republicans polled a little over 52 per cent of the total vote of the state, and this was obviously no "great majority". The fact that Grant had received 63.86 per cent of the entire popular vote in 1872 and Hayes but 52.27 per cent this year, apparently disclosed a large decline in the dominant party.² This is, however, somewhat less serious than it appears, since many Democrats refused to vote for Greeley in 1872 and thus gave the Republicans a larger proportional following than they otherwise would have had. As this unusual condition of affairs no longer existed, a position nearer equilibrium was attained, and the party balance reacted in favor of the Democracy.

The vote for governor was very similar to that for President, and the support of the other members of the state ticket closely approximated that of the governor.³ Mr. Croswell, the successful candidate, was fifty-one years of age and a prominent lawyer of Adrian. In personality and politics he was highly respected by both parties, and the most serious comment ever passed upon him during the campaign was "his lack of positiveness".

¹ *Adv. and Trib.*, Nov. 5.

² Hayes received 166,901, Tilden 141,595, Cooper, the Greenback candidate, 9,060; *Mich. Alm.*, 1877, pp. 13-65; *Trib. Alm.*, 1877, pp. 83-85; *Mich. Man.* 1877, pp. 209-212. These votes include the returns from the counties of Chippewa, Mackinac and Schoolcraft which were not received in time for the official canvass but which show the party preferences of those localities.

³ Croswell received 165,926, Webster 142,492, Sparks 8,297, and Williams, 874. *Mich. Man.*, 1877, pp. 213-294; *Mich. Alm.*, 1877, pp. 13-24.

In the Congressional elections, the Republicans were as a rule victorious. In the first district alone was a Democrat, Alpheus S. Williams, elected to Congress. His majority was somewhat larger than it was two years before when as a Democrat and Reform candidate, he defeated Field, the Republican.¹

In the state legislature, the Republicans showed the greatest gains. Their joint majority rose from 10 to 64 and their membership now exceeded three-fourths of the body. The Upper Peninsula remained divided, and in the five upper tiers of counties, which showed a tendency toward the Democracy in 1872, the Republicans were strongly predominant. In the central portion the latter were also in the majority, but in the south the parties were as usual much more evenly divided.²

The Greenback vote varied widely but nowhere did it exceed $13\frac{1}{3}$ per cent of the total vote, and this it received in Kent County. The party gained greater support in the counties of the lower west and south.³ The names on the Prohibition state ticket received on an average only 750 votes this year, while the so-called "Temperance candidates" two years before polled 3,900 votes on an average. This falling-off was undoubtedly due to the activity of the State License party since 1874. The Prohibition candidates for Congress in the first five districts received but little support, and in those which had made nominations for Congress in 1874, it was evident the support had de-

¹ *Mich. Alm.*, 1877, p. 66. The greatest Democratic gains are noticeable in Branch, Hillsdale, Houghton, Ionia, Kent, Lenawee and Van Buren Counties.

² The most evenly balanced counties were Clinton, Ingham, Jackson, Livingston, Macomb, Oakland and St. Clair.

³ Allegan, Barry, Berrien, Branch, Hillsdale, Kent, Muskegon, Newago, St. Joseph, Van Buren and Wayne.

creased. The Temperance advocates received a further discouragement by the adoption of the proposed amendment permitting the sale of intoxicating liquors under rigid regulations.¹

Besides the amendment providing for the licensed sale of liquors, two others were submitted to the people at the general elections. The proposition to increase the salaries of circuit court judges was again defeated by the close vote of 65,371 to 65,966, and that authorizing the submission of the question of amendment or revision at spring as well as fall elections was adopted by a vote of 52,306 to 21,684.²

THE RE-ELECTION OF SENATOR FERRY

At this point the Senatorial election can best be considered; for though it did not occur until January, the story of Michigan and the contested election does not close until early in March. The latter subject will, therefore, be considered last in order that it may not be interrupted. The Senatorial election of 1877 was less spirited than it had been for years. As Chandler was busied now with his duties as Secretary of the Interior and especially as Chairman of the Republican national committee, he did not interfere in the movement to re-elect Ferry this year. The career of the latter as a President of the Senate had made him more popular than any measures he had introduced or furthered—except perhaps his currency policy, which found support among the soft-money element. The opinion is now generally expressed that he was politically a weak man and the fact was undoubtedly realized at that time, but fortunately

¹ An amendment to Section 47, Article IV. The vote was 60,639 in its favor, to 52,561 in opposition.

² *Mich. Alm.*, 1877, pp. 51, 64-66; *Mich. Man.*, 1879, pp. 174-6.

for him there was no strong rival for the nomination. William A. Howard was too infirm to think of the Senatorship, and Austin Blair had so far forsaken the Republican party that he had been placed on the electoral ticket of the Democracy in company with George V. N. Lothrop, a staunch hard-money Democrat. The position of Ferry on the currency question undoubtedly alienated many, though it secured for him a portion of the vote of the Greenback party. Resumption was now provided for, and the importance of the currency question was diminished to such an extent that it no longer formed the main criterion of party judgment. It was Ferry's parliamentary ability that was undoubtedly the strongest in his favor, and the impartiality he showed in presiding during the electoral count was to confirm the high regard in which he was held.

At first it was expected to run Governor Bagley in opposition to Ferry, but the movement was not a strong one. In the Republican caucus of the state legislature held Wednesday evening, January 3rd, not a half-dozen members could be found to support Governor Bagley, and as his friends decided to withdraw his name, Ferry was chosen by unanimous vote. His brother, Edward P. Ferry, addressed the caucus and expressed appreciation for the nomination. It was true that "a hard-money party had," as the Democrats observed, "selected as its candidate one of the softest of soft-money fanatics."¹

There was far more rivalry among the factions of the Democratic party. On January 11th, the Democrats held their legislative caucus at which thirty-one were present. Three ballots were taken, the first two of which were informal, the last formal. There were three possibilities—

¹ It was decided at this caucus that each Congressional district should second Ferry's nomination, but no action was taken in the first district in which Bagley resided. *Adv. and Trib.*, Jan. 4, 1877.

General Charles S. May, once a supporter of Johnson, and now a prominent Democrat who had several times been candidate for high state offices, and the two Democratic electors, Austin Blair and General G. V. N. Lothrop. On the first ballot, May led with 11 votes, Blair followed a close second with 10, and Lothrop ranked last. On the third ballot, May received 18 votes, Blair 13, while Lothrop received none, and on the motion of Senator Shoemaker the nomination of May was made unanimous. It is obvious that Blair was not far from gaining the candidacy, and had he succeeded, he would then have accomplished the rare political feat of first serving as War Governor and Republican Representative in Congress and after a few years becoming the Senatorial candidate of the Democracy. The election took place January 16th, and Thomas W. Ferry, the Republican candidate, was again chosen Senator. The joint vote was 94 to 32 in Ferry's favor, and one of the two senatorships was thus provided for until March 3, 1883.¹

The Democrats were not silent upon the question of Ferry's election. "Governor Bagley found the office-holding element under Chandler too strong," insinuated a Democratic journal, and Chandler personally was very hostile to any candidate from Detroit."² As Chandler was at the time Secretary of the Interior and not a candidate for the office, it might be wondered why he should wish to defeat a resident of Detroit. The reason lay in the fact that he expected to run for the next Senatorial election, and understood the significance of the "locality principle," which required a territorial balance of representation in the upper house of Congress.

¹Senate, 23 to 9, House 71 to 23. *H. Jour.*, 1877, pp. 147-9; *Post, Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, Jan. 12, 1877.

²*Free Press*, Jan. 6, 1877.

MICHIGAN AND THE DISPUTED ELECTORAL COUNT

The Presidential election and the Hayes-Tilden contest were watched in Michigan as elsewhere with a zeal that overshadowed the interest in both the State elections and the choice of Senator. From November 8, 1876, to March 3, 1877, the attention of both parties was directed exclusively to the outcome of the controversy, with no interruption except the Senatorial election in January, which commanded far less interest this year than usual. It is generally believed that several members of the National Republican Committee attempted to establish a Republican victory by issuing bulletins and sending messages the morning following the election, declaring Hayes President. At a very early hour the morning of November 8th, William E. Chandler wrote three telegrams to this effect, "Hayes is elected if we have carried South Carolina, Florida, and Louisiana," and one was sent by him and Mr. John C. Reid, news editor of the *New York Times*, to the Returning Board of each of the three states.

It was also during the early morning that Zachariah Chandler, the National Republican Chairman, wrote the telegram which has become well known, "Rutherford B. Hayes has received 185 electoral votes and is elected," and sent it over the wires of the Associated Press. The motive was alleged by the Democrats to be a conspiracy among leading Republican politicians to take advantage of the uncertainty expressed in a message of William Barnum to the *New York Times*, concerning the three doubtful southern states and Oregon.¹

¹ Chandler wrote this telegram seated in his office in the Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York City, the headquarters of the National Committee. William Barnum was the Chairman of the Democratic National Committee. Haworth, *The Hayes-Tilden Disputed Election of 1876*, pp. 50-52; Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, p. 228, and note; *Post and Tribune*

On the same day, November 8th, the Detroit *Free Press* on the other hand declared victory certain for the Democrats, and the succeeding day it announced the election of Tilden as an accomplished fact. The same organ declared there were no grounds for doubt, as the party was sure of victory "unless there should be cheating." During these three anxious days the leading Republican journals never admitted defeat, and on November 11th the *Advertiser and Tribune* ventured to assert that South Carolina, Louisiana, Florida and Mississippi had gone Republican. However, November 13th, it was generally conceded by both parties that the uncertainty would be protracted, though at the same time each claimed the victory.

The two views concerning the correct method of counting the electoral vote in Congress were held in Michigan, as elsewhere, by members of the two opposing parties. Some of the Republicans in Michigan, led by Chandler, declared that to the President of the Senate belonged the power to count the electoral votes. The Constitution provides that "the President of the Senate shall, in the presence of the Senate and the House of Representatives, open all the certificates and the votes shall then be counted." Upon this provision, then, a group of Michigan Republicans claimed for Mr. Ferry the exclusive right to count the votes—however unwilling he may have been to assume the responsibility—and the two houses they considered were witnesses rather than participants in the process.

The main subject of controversy was the twenty-second joint rule which provided that the electoral vote of any State could be excluded by either house. This rule had

Life of Chandler, p. 356 *et seq.*; Foulke, *Life of Oliver P. Morton*, p. 432; *Mich. Coll.*, vol. xxix, p. 593; *North American Review*, "The Death Struggle of the Republican Party," by George W. Julian, p. 282; *Eve. News*, Apr. 6, 1877.

remained in force since the election of 1864, but as it had not been re-enacted by the present Congress, it could not be considered as binding upon it, and either house could lawfully refuse to acquiesce in its further application. As the majority of the House were Democratic, it was obvious that should the rule be considered still in force, they would throw out the returns from the Republican authorities in the three doubtful southern states, South Carolina, Florida and Louisiana, and thus secure the election of Mr. Tilden. The majority of the Republicans were therefore strong opponents of the joint rule, while the Democrats were its staunch defenders.¹

On December 7th, while this question was receiving general discussion, George W. McCrary, a Representative from Iowa, proposed a plan by which the question of joint rule could be evaded by the appointment of a Joint Committee on the Election by the Senate and the House. Both bodies adopted a resolution to this effect and promptly appointed their respective committees of seven, in which the only Michigan member was George Willard of the House. When, after almost a month had elapsed; this Joint Committee was found to be powerless in effecting an adjustment of the two conflicting views, it was again McCrary who devised a plan which he hoped would be successful.² This was developed by January 13th in the secret sessions of the Joint Committee, of which McCrary was a member, and provided for a tribunal of fifteen whose membership was to include five Representatives, five Senators, and five Justices of the Supreme Court. As it was known that the Senate would choose Republicans and the House Democrats, it was obvious that the political status of the Commission as a whole would be determined by the preference

¹ Burgess, *Reconstruction and the Constitution*, p. 283 *et seq.*

² Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 248, 250-1.

of the majority of the Justices. This was left to chance, by excluding by lot one of the names of the six senior Associate Justices. The plan became generally known by January 15th, and was opposed in Michigan by members of both parties, who urged the impropriety of leaving so grave a problem to be settled by lot.¹

After various attempts at agreement upon a satisfactory organization of the Commission, Senator Edmunds devised a plan acceptable to all the members of the Joint Committee save Morton, and framed a bill providing that "no electoral vote or votes of any state from which but one return has been received shall be rejected except by the affirmative vote of the two Houses." In the cases of states from which there were more than one return—Florida, Louisiana, South Carolina and Oregon—all such returns and papers must be submitted to the judgment and decision of an Electoral Commission. This body was given the same form of organization as that under McCrary's plan, except the choice of the fifth justice by the first four.²

As fortunate and commendable as was this proposition, there was a considerable element of opposition to it in Michigan, headed by Zachariah Chandler. He vigorously objected to the measure and declared there was but one agent by whom the votes could be counted and announced, and that was the President of the Senate. Generally, however the Edmunds plan met with very friendly support in Michigan, among both the Democrats and less extreme Republicans.³

¹ *Post*, Jan. 16, 1877, with the views of Chandler and William A. Howard.

² Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, p. 255; *Post and Trib. Life of Chandler*, p. 358; *Post*, Jan. 21, 1877.

³ *Argus*, *Free Press*, *Eve. News*, *Jackson Daily Citizen*, for the month of January.

The bill was introduced into the Senate by Edmunds, January 20th, and Christiancy, who had returned from Columbia, South Carolina, whither he had gone as member of the Investigating Committee, made a short speech in its favor.¹ It was passed in the legislative session of January 24th, with Christiancy among those voting in the affirmative, and Ferry among the absent.² On January 26th, the bill came to a vote in the House, and here it was opposed by three Michigan members, all of whom were Republicans—Omar D. Conger, Jay Hubbell and Henry Waldron.³ The Democrats throughout the state were well pleased with the passage of the Electoral Bill, and expressed the hope that the Commission would not confine itself to merely clerical duties but would not hesitate to go behind the returns. They assured themselves that "each house alone or both houses together could go behind returns, and therefore the Electoral Commission can do so."⁴ On the other hand, it was apparent that the Republicans were not of the same opinion, using as their main argument: "Where would the investigation end if the commission should go behind the votes and inquire into their validity?"⁵

In pursuance of the new Electoral Commission Act, the Senate and House each chose their five members *vive voce*, January 30th. In the Senate neither Michigan member was mentioned, but both favored the five who were chosen. In the House Willard, having received but two votes.

¹ *Cong. Record*, pp. 886-8, [S. no. 1153.]

² *Cong. Record*, p. 913; Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, p. 261.

³ *Cong. Record*, p. 1050. Those who had been on the whole most favorable were Allen Potter, William B. Williams, and George Willard, while Nathaniel Bradley, George Durand and Alpheus Williams were less enthusiastic. *Argus*, Jan. 26, 1877.

⁴ *Argus*, Feb. 7, 1877.

⁵ *Adv. and Trib.*, Feb. 2.

ranked eighth, and thus Michigan failed to be represented on the Commission.¹

The first case to go before the Electoral Commission was that of Florida, and on February 10th, that state was adjudged to Hayes by a vote of 8 to 7.² As the Commission had refused to investigate the returns, the Democrats were deeply disappointed and naturally considered the activity of that body as "narrow work". They declared that as the Justices were not free from political motives, the decision was "decidedly unpalatable". While expressing high respect for Hayes, they considered that by the Florida decision "a great wrong had been done the country."³

The next state to be considered was Louisiana, and referring to its Returning Board Senator Christiancy confessed that he "had not felt and did not then feel a very high confidence in its integrity." He feared that "they may have sought to overcome by fraud, on their own part, the fraud, violence and intimidations committed by their opponents, thus creating a fearful clashing of wrongs which would not be likely to result in the attainment of right." "I have therefore," he continued, "felt that whichever party should triumph—that triumph would be no cause for exultation; that it must be accepted without pride and not wholly without some feeling of humiliation at some unwarrantable means used by its friends for the attainment of their object." It is obvious that Senator Christiancy possessed a greater degree of frankness than most of the Republican leaders, but upon Sherman's resolution to accept the report of the Commission giving the

¹ *Cong. Record*, Jan. 30, pp. 1108-9, 1113-4. Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, p. 263.

² Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 265-9.

³ *Free Press*, Feb. 8, 1877.

electoral vote to Hayes, Christiancy voted with Ferry in the affirmative.¹

The case of South Carolina was decided in the Commission February 27th, and came before Congress on the succeeding day. Senator Christiancy of Michigan had served with Cameron of Wisconsin and Merriman of North Carolina on the Committee of Investigation for South Carolina. He remained there and took testimony for over a month and declared February 28th that there was no evidence of any influence exerted upon the voters by the presence of the military force. "The army was used simply to repress violence," he said, "and protect the lives of the colored people who were fleeing to the swamps. If it had not been there," he continued, "the rebels would have intimidated negroes into voting the Democratic ticket." He wished it understood that he did not favor a permanent military government in these states. With reference to going behind the returns and inquiring into the question of fraud, he declared "a single presidential term would not be long enough" to complete this work. Upon the question of adopting the Commission's decision to give South Carolina to the Republicans, both Christiancy and Ferry voted yea.²

After all the thirty-eight states had been considered, the result was announced by Ferry at four o'clock Friday morning, March 2nd—which was the close of the session of the preceding day. Tilden had received 184 electoral votes, Hayes 185, and was elected.³

The flood of comment on the mornings of March 3rd and 5th included much that was bitter. If the Democracy of the state was fairly represented by its journals, it was

¹ *Cong. Record*, Feb. 19, 1877, p. 1683.

² *Cong. Record*, pp. 2001-2; *Eve. News*, Feb. 29, 1877.

³ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 278-9.

true that the party believed it had been cheated out of its rightful victory.¹ It was not strange that their invective centered about Zachariah Chandler, the National Republican Chairman, against whom charges were made of encouraging an unscrupulous manipulation of the returns from the dubious Southern states. They alleged that one week before election Chandler declared: "If the result shall depend upon South Carolina, Florida and Louisiana, Hayes will be elected. We have the means to carry these states."²

On Hayes' inauguration, a prominent Democratic organ called him a minority President but showed a strong appreciation of his policy. "He contemplates building up a Republican party in the South," it observed, "composed of some other elements than Scalawag Whites and ignorant Blacks. He designs a radically different policy from that which was pursued by the late administration."³ Such was the optimistic attitude of a Democratic daily, towards a Republican President who took office under color of illegality.

¹ *Free Press, Eve. News, Jackson Patriot, Kal. Gazette, Lansing Courier* for the days immediately following the announcement.

² *Argus*, Nov. 10, 1876, Mar. 9, 1877.

³ *Free Press*, Mar. 6, 1877.

CHAPTER VIII

A RÉSUMÉ OF THE POLITICS OF MICHIGAN, 1877-1878

THE CLOSE OF RECONSTRUCTION AND THE GENERAL ISSUES OF 1877

THE early part of 1877 saw the withdrawal of federal troops from Florida, South Carolina and Louisiana and the supremacy of the white Democracy in those states. Previous to his election Hayes had not declared his policy with reference to the South, but the opinion became general that he would not continue the policy of federal intervention. He was not to be considered a deserter, however, since Grant himself would have entered upon a more liberal policy in reconstruction, had he continued in office, and a certain element of the Republican party also was willing to make concessions.¹ The others were strongly opposed to any deviation from the rigid plan of enforced negro suffrage secured by the intervention of United States troops, and these very soon came to be known as the "Stalwarts".

At the time of the inauguration of President Hayes there were claimants of both parties to the state offices in South Carolina and Louisiana. The former was first to receive attention. After a consultation with both Chamberlain and Wade Hampton, Hayes decided to withdraw the federal forces from Columbia, and on April 10th the Republican administration of Chamberlain gave way to Democratic rule under Wade Hampton.² It was with this

¹ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, p. 286.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 285-7.

event that there began an estrangement between Hayes and Chandler, and the breach was widened by the similar withdrawal of federal military support in Louisiana accompanied by the triumph of Nicholls and the Democracy, April 24th.¹ The opposition of Chandler was potent enough to cause all praise and commendation of the President to be omitted in the State Republican platform of the following year.²

During the last months of 1877 the silver question was uppermost in national politics, and elicited much local comment. The Republicans in Michigan, with Chandler at their head, objected to the proposal of Mr. Bland of Missouri, to restore the silver dollar to free coinage as had been the case before 1873. The Allison Amendment designated the amount of silver bullion to be purchased for this coinage provided for in the Bland Act.³ During the closing months of the year 1877 and the early part of 1878 the question received full discussion in the journals of the state. In answer to a Republican criticism that silver would drive gold out of circulation should the Bland bill

¹ Rhodes, *op. cit.*, vol. vii, pp. 287-9.

² The comment of the *Post* during the summer of 1877 was more unfriendly than after its consolidation with the more liberal *Advertiser and Tribune*, October 14, 1877. In the number for Dec. 21, the blame for Hayes' policy was removed from the President and laid upon the cabinet, "whose advice showed it to be out of harmony with the majority" of its party.

³ This act required the government to purchase every month not less than \$2,000,000 nor more than \$4,000,000 worth of silver bullion, and coin it into dollars at the rate of 371½ grains of fine silver for each dollar, and these were made full legal tender. There was thus added to the currency a large amount of debased money, as the legal and market ratios of silver to gold varied widely. Furthermore, the increased demand thus created for silver failed to raise its price.

Dewey, *Financial History of the United States*.

Laurence J. Laughlin, *History of Bimetallism in the United States*, ch. xiii.

with the Allison amendment become a law, a Democratic organ replied in the following manner :

It is not impracticable to keep two metals in circulation, each in its own sphere with the rate properly adjusted, and investigation will show what the ratio between the two metals should be. It is quite certain that limiting the amount of coinage or the extent of its use as legal tender would appreciate silver.¹

Such was a statement of principle found in a leading Democratic journal of the state, but on grounds of practical expediency, the organ was not favorably disposed toward the Bland-Allison measure. There were some Democrats in the state, however, who were not hostile to the bill with the amendment, and the greenback element strongly urged its passage.

The Republicans in Michigan as elsewhere were not in harmony upon this issue, and the division cannot therefore be traced to party affiliations. Senator Ferry of Michigan, the well-known defender of paper currency, appeared as the persistent advocate of silver, while his colleague, Senator Christiancy, was among the strongest opponents of the silver measure. In his long speech of January 30, 1878, Mr. Christiancy said in part :

This silver mania . . . seems to me a very peculiar disease. . . . Its intensity seems to be manifested very nearly in proportion to the proximity of the victims to the great bonanza mines. It seems to have passed to the people, attacking with most severity those most deeply in debt.²

On February 15th, the Bland Bill with the Allison

¹ *Free Press*, Dec. 5, 1877.

² Laughlin, *op. cit.*, p. 192, footnote 1; *Globe*, vol. cxxxvi, pp. 666-71; for a second important speech delivered Feb. 6, 1878, *ibid.*, pp. 792-6.

Amendment passed the Senate by a vote of 48 to 21, with Ferry voting in the affirmative, and Christianity in the negative.¹ Six days later it passed the House by a vote of 203 to 72, with eight Michigan members expressing themselves favorably, and one not voting.² On February 28th, the President's veto message was received,³ and on the same day the bill was repassed by the House, in which only two Michigan members opposed it, and by the Senate where Ferry continued his support and Christianity refrained from voting.⁴

The comment throughout the state showed differences of opinion within both parties. The majority of Michigan Republicans in Congress had certainly thrown their influence in favor of the bill, and thus proved themselves friends of a silver currency. It cannot be ascertained what view was predominant in the state, but several of the leading organs declared themselves out of sympathy with Ferry, and defended the position of Christianity.⁵

The time was approaching when preparations must be made for the election of 1878, and the organization and issues of the several parties in Michigan will now be considered.

THE NATIONAL GREENBACK PARTY IN MICHIGAN

The Greenback party continued to flourish in Michigan after 1876, but during the succeeding year and a half there

¹ *Globe*, vol. cxxxvii, p. 1112.

² *Globe*, p. 1284. Edwin W. Keightley was a Republican not voting.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 1418-9.

⁴ The vote in the House was 196 to 73, in the Senate 46 to 19. The two Representatives who voted in the negative were Alpheus S. Williams, the one Democrat, and Charles C. Ellsworth, a Republican. *Globe*, pp. 1420, 1411.

⁵ *Lansing State Rep.*, Feb. 23, Mar. 2, 1878; *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, Feb. 25.

developed some slight differences of view which tended to weaken the party. The faction within the state who termed themselves "Nationals" favored the issue of bonds not convertible into coin, but payable in greenbacks, while the "Greenbackers" opposed bonds of any kind because of their interest-bearing character. The leader of the latter was Ralph E. Hoyt, of Jackson, and of the former was Moses Field, a well-known Republican with paper currency inclinations. The necessity for harmony was apparent, and on May 10th the call was issued for a state convention, June 5th, "to effect a more perfect union."¹

It was understood generally that "should the difficulties be adjusted, there will be cause for anxiety on the part of the Republicans."² Both the "Nationals" and the "Greenbackers" declared against any "entangling alliances", and the Republicans in turn refused to make any concessions. There were indications, however, that a considerable number of votes would be deflected from the Republican party, and should the new organization—if such should be formed—find very strong support, the Democracy would have an easy victory.³

The convention met at Grand Rapids, June 5th, effected a coalition which was of great interest to both of the regular organizations, and gave themselves the name of "National Greenback Party."

The purposes of the movement as set forth by George Willard, the temporary chairman of the convention, were "to create a national paper and suppress bank issues". The interests of the party in general were not sectional but national, he declared, and its object was to secure a nationally-recognized currency—hence its name. It also

¹ *Free Press*, May 11, 1878.

² *Eve. News*, June 5.

³ *Eve. News*, July 13, Aug. 3, 1878.

tended to represent the interests of the laboring and the debtor classes. Both factions united in choosing Moses Field for permanent chairman, and proceeded to formulate their platform.

The resolutions demanded the unconditional repeal of the "so-called Resumption Act" and the National Banking Law, and required that paper be issued exclusively by the general government, "such paper money to be a full legal tender for all debts public and private." Resolutions were also adopted against the further issue of interest-bearing bonds. The party showed itself friendly to laboring interests by demanding a reduction of the number of hours of toil in order to give "more leisure for mental improvement and saving from premature decay and death." The tariff plank was made carefully non-committal, merely expressing favor for "such laws as will best protect the industries of the nation and confer the greatest good on the greatest number."¹ The state ticket was headed by Henry S. Smith for governor.

It was a debated question which of the older organizations lost the more members to this new National Greenback Party. From the first it was understood that it would not form a coalition with either of the old organizations and its absolute independence and uncompromising character tempted the Democrats to conciliate, for a time threatening to cause a schism in that party. There was some evidence, however, that after the nomination of the National Greenback state ticket, the members of Democratic antecedents wished to withdraw from the "irre-

¹ *Grand Rapids Dem.*, June 7. The *Adrian Press*, June 14, declared that the "lack of intrinsic value only makes the greenback inferior because it can't be used as an international currency. However, the convenience and safety as paper money far over-balances its intrinsic inferiority."

deemable party,"¹ and a Democratic organ confidently predicted that nine-tenths of them would return before election.² Though there is no way of proving a statement of such a nature, it is a safe conclusion that the conscience of the Democracy was not on the side of an irredeemable paper currency. Nevertheless concessions were made and compromises reluctantly entered into in local nominations which seriously diminished the following of the older organization.

There was far less response on the part of Republicans, as most of them had been whipped into line with the traditional hard-money policy of the party by the warnings of a few leading organs and by the defeat in 1874. As the district party platforms had almost always contained declarations in favor of hard money, the men of opposite inclinations promptly abandoned their former principles, or absolutely severed their party affiliations. There was little tolerance within the party for members of Greenback sympathies, and a state conference was held in Detroit, April 18th, to denounce the movement. A leading Republican journal declared that of about seventy-five Republican organs in the state that had taken sides on the question, all but three favored the maintenance of specie payments. On the other hand, it stated that ten of the thirty Democratic journals had soft-money preferences, but this statement cannot be proven, and was probably an exaggeration.³ One notable instance of disaffection in the Republican party was not a surprise to anyone—that of Moses Field. He was the only member of the Michigan delegation to Congress who voted against the Resumption Act, and the

¹ *Eve. News*, June 6, 7, 1878.

² *Free Press*, June 14.

³ *Lansing State Rep.*, April 26, 1878.

next year he openly joined the new party and became the chairman of its state executive committee.¹

THE REPUBLICANS

The Republicans held their State Convention in Detroit, Thursday, June 13th, and chose Zachariah Chandler as permanent chairman. When he took the chair he indulged in a "ringing speech of fifteen minutes against the rebel conspirators at Washington," of which the following is a typical selection.

Why are there so many here to-day? The reason is obvious, there is danger in the country. The rebels have captured Washington, gained possession of one branch of the National Legislature by fraud, murder, assassination and torture, and they are liable soon to gain possession of the other. The Democrats have determined through revolution to overturn the Constitution and the Government.²

With reference to the money question he declared that, "the Republican party was the original greenback party, and no other class of men has any right to that name. The Republican party demands that one dollar in greenbacks shall be made equal to one dollar in gold or silver, and redeemable in the latter." Later in his speech Chandler paid his respects in typical fashion to the National party, which he declared "an agglomeration of all the rascality in the nation." At the close of his address Chandler received tremendous applause, to which the Republican organs took great pleasure in drawing the attention of the public.

The platform demanded the "free and untrammelled exercise of the right of suffrage," with reference obviously

¹ *Globe*, Dec. 22, 1874, p. 208, Jan. 7, 1875, p. 319; *Lansing State Rep.*, May 10.

² *Lansing State Rep., Post*, June 14, 1878.

to the difficulties of the negroes in voting in the Southern States. The party rejoiced at the early adjournment of Congress, and the "respite it afforded from the reckless and mischievous schemes of ignorant legislators made formidable by the despotism of a caucus." This was no unmistakable expression of the Republican attitude upon the financial legislation which, after pending since the middle of 1876, was finally passed as the Bland-Allison Act, February 28, 1878.¹ Repudiation was denounced in every form, and a "circulation of paper and coin interchangeable at par and at the will of the holder" was declared the best known to commerce. The party viewed "with apprehension the platform, resolutions and publications of the uncompromising opposition."²

The state ticket was headed by Governor Croswell, whose administration was declared "prudent, wise, honest, and economical." In closing, the convention declared him entitled to the "cordial respect and confidence of the people of the state of Michigan." Earlier in the campaign, however, there had been a movement set afoot for Zachariah Chandler as the successor of Governor Croswell, whom a small faction thought of dismissing after one term in office. This was closely connected with the estrangement of Chandler from Hayes, as Croswell was generally understood to be the opponent of the leader of the Stalwarts. Chandler stoutly denied all rumors of his connection with the governorship, and it is to be concluded that the movement was undertaken by some of his Stalwart friends, who did not understand that their leader preferred keeping himself independent and in readiness for a Senatorship.

¹ Cf. *supra*, p. 216, note 2.

² *Lansing State Rep.*, June 14; *Mich. Alm.*, 1879, pp. 15, 16.

THE DEMOCRACY

The Democracy of Michigan this year presented various shades of opinion on the money question. Some of the leading journals feared that a disposition to conciliate the National Greenback party would lead to very unwise concessions. They accordingly declared that delegates could not afford to sacrifice any principles in order to secure votes. If the platform touched the currency question, it must contain only such declarations as approve resumption. "No overtures are to be made to the Greenback party," insisted a prominent Democratic leader, who warned the convention that "coin was the constitutional money of the country" and that the value of paper was only acquired by the pledge of the government stamp, convertibility being an indispensable requirement.¹ The party certainly had reason for apprehending a disagreement in its ranks on the currency issue, which had been revived—or at least renewed—by the efforts to repeal the Resumption Act. It was, then, its main interest to maintain unity, and receive all the support possible without compromising too much.

The State Convention met in Lansing, July 10th, with a large and harmonious attendance. The platform as presented by the Committee on Resolutions was discussed fully and finally adopted by almost a unanimous vote. It arraigned the Republican party for corruption, for the establishment of giant monopolies, and for squandering the public lands. It declared that the prostrate condition of the country demanded the reduction of state and national taxation to the lowest point possible. The plank to which the greatest attention by far was directed was that on the currency issue. "Gold and silver are the money of the

¹ Address of George V. N. Lothrop, *Free Press*, July 5, 1878.

Constitution", it declared, "and all paper currency should be convertible into such coin at the will of the holder."

The state ticket was headed this year by Orlando M. Barnes for governor, a man with hard-money preferences.¹ It was noticeable that in making its nomination this year, the party practically abandoned its policy of yielding to the Granger sentiment. In 1874 it had exercised great care in selecting a ticket representative of the agriculturist class. Four years later not one farmer was to be found among the candidates for state office, though several were owners of rural property. This fact would not require mention had not the Democracy formerly declared and shown themselves the special friends of the agriculturist class. It was evident that the party had left behind it several of the minor issues by which it had advanced to greater power in the several years just preceding, and the Republicans took occasion to make this observation more than once.²

THE PROHIBITIONISTS

The Prohibitionists still continued to meet, make nominations and to declare their views, notwithstanding their constantly failing power in Michigan, and the constitutional amendment against prohibition adopted in November, 1876.³ Their convention was held in Lansing, August 13th, and the platform related to many matters of reform and social improvement. The party demanded an amendment to the Federal Constitution prohibiting "the importation, exportation, manufacture and traffic of all alcoholic

¹ *Mich. Alm.*, 1879, p. 17; *Free Press*, July 11.

² The *Lansing State Rep.*, July 12, classified the ticket as follows: three lawyers, three editors, one lumber dealer, one real estate agent and one teacher.

³ *Cf. supra*, chap. vii, p. 204.

beverages in all places subject to the Congress of the United States," and it recommended treaties to that effect with foreign powers. It declared for the abolition of class legislation and the adoption of equal suffrage and eligibility to office without distinction of race, religious creed or sex. The public lands were to be reserved for actual settlers, and the federal and state government should compel the establishment of free public schools. Amicable relations between nations were to be furthered by arbitration provisions in all treaties thereafter signed, and the penal methods of the country were to be reformed by the adoption of "more human modes of punishment."

The position of the Prohibitionists upon the financial issue was for the most part sound. The national government alone should have the right to issue paper money, they insisted, and this should be subject to prompt redemption on demand in gold or silver. The party also declared for the abolition of executive and legislative patronage, for direct popular vote in the election of civil officers so far as possible, for reduction of salaries of public officers and for strict economy in the discharge of their administrative duties. The interests of the party thus came to include general reforms, and while it exercised little direct influence upon the politics of the time, it pointed out much-needed changes.¹

THE CAMPAIGN AND ELECTION OF 1878

The campaign in Michigan was fought bitterly by the Republicans, who were dominated as usual by the more extreme and radical faction—the "Stalwarts" under Zachariah Chandler. They drew up their campaign plans along

¹ *Lansing State Rep.*, *Evening News*, Aug. 14; *Lansing Journal*, Aug. 15; *Argus*, Aug. 16. The candidate for governor was Watson Snyder, who was not prominent in a political capacity.

the line of the obsolete issue of Reconstruction and their treatment of that theme is typified by the speech of Chandler at the State Republican Convention. The withdrawal of federal troops from South Carolina and Louisiana¹ highly displeased Chandler, who believed that the President of his choice had abandoned the chief principle of the party—sufficient guarantee of loyalty before admission of the rebel states into the union.

It was against Chandler, then, as the leader of the “Stalwarts” that the fire of the Democrats was directed this year.² The latter effectively seized upon the vulnerable points in the Republican position, and asked: “Who nominated Hayes and was responsible for his candidacy? And who made him President of the United States? The Republican party nominated him, and no less a notable than the National Chairman of the Republican party made him President. . . . Tragic it is when a favorite falls so soon before his benefactors!”³

The paper-money issue was another fruitful source of mutual recrimination. The Republicans, who expected that a division would occur in the Democratic party along that line, were often found scoffing at the Democrats for showing a rather embarrassing tendency to embrace the green-back doctrines. The offended party, however, had good material for retaliation. “Who was Moses Field, that friend of soft money,” they asked, “and Thomas M. Ferry, a member of the Paper Trinity?”⁴

The election of 1878 was more disastrous to the Democ-

¹ Cf. *supra*, p. 215.

² Address of the Democratic State Central Committee, in the *Argus*, Sept. 13, 1878. Don. M. Dickinson, who had served as chairman, was succeeded by William B. Moran.

³ *Lansing Jour.*, July 9.

⁴ *Niles Dem.*, July 19, 1878.

racy of Michigan than that two years before. Besides electing the entire state ticket—which was only to be expected—the Republicans chose all nine Congressmen, and 90 members of a legislature of 132. The Democratic membership receded to 24, and the Greenbackers claimed 18. The dominant party could thus boast practically three-fourths of the membership.¹ Strangely enough the Greenback party advanced so rapidly, that its power was not far inferior to that of the Democracy this year. The former carried eight counties, the latter fourteen, but in the southern portion of the state a very strong minority of Greenbackers existed in many of the counties. From the relative strength of the two parties in the election of state legislature and local officers, it may be concluded that the Greenback party contained about three-fourths as great a membership as the Democracy.

It was also obvious that the Democrats had lost to the newer organization—and this they recognized themselves. Their attitude after the election was mainly one of disgust at the “attempt of their party to secure votes by a sacrifice of principle.” It was felt that the Democracy had lowered their standard in order to prevent defection to the National Greenback party, and to win back deserters—and they suffered accordingly. But the tone of the press was hopeful. “The losses from defection will be made up and the strength of the Democratic party will return.”²

SENATORIAL ELECTION OF 1879, AND THE RETURN OF CHANDLER

This was not the year for a regular Senatorial election,

¹ *Mich. Alm.*, 1879, pp. 69-81, 88, 123; *Mich. Man.*, 1879, 123-153, 154-9, 160-79; *Trib. Alm.*, 1879.

² *Argus*, Nov. 8. For other accounts of the election, *Free Press*, *Jackson Patriot*, *Grand Rapids Dem.*, Nov. 6-9.

but Mr. Christiancy's seat unexpectedly became vacant, and the new legislature was called upon to choose his successor. An unfortunate matrimonial experience while in Washington rendered Mr. Christiancy's domestic life so unhappy, and his social relations so uncongenial, that he resigned from the Senate in January to accept a foreign post. Several positions were offered him, and he accepted the ministry to Peru. It was no less than a tragedy which removed from Congress so able a man elected by an independent movement, and so well qualified to do splendid service.

The Republicans agreed this time on Chandler, as the opposition against him had ceased to be effective. The Democrats nominated Orlando M. Barnes, and the Greenbackers Henry Chamberlain—both very prominent Democrats. The election occurred February 18, 1878, and the joint vote for Chandler was 88, that of Barnes 22, that of Chamberlain 18, and four members were absent.¹ Thus Chandler was returned to the Senate without strong opposition, and his ambition since his defeat four years before was realized by an unexpected contingency and a special election. He did not serve out the unfinished term for which he was elected, however, as his death suddenly occurred after a strenuous campaign in Illinois in 1879.²

With the return of Chandler to the Senate and the restored harmony within the Republican party, this study will end. The rise of an opposition would be noticeable henceforth, if the investigation were continued, which

¹ *Senate and House Jour.*, 1879; *Mich. Man.*, 1879, pp. 319-20. The vote in the Senate stood thus: Chandler 22, Barnes 2, Chamberlain 5, absent and not voting, 2 Democrats, 1 Republican. In the House Chandler received 66 votes, Barnes 20, Chamberlain 13, and one Democrat was absent. The credentials were read in the Senate, Feb. 22.

² Nov. 1, 1879, in Chicago. He was succeeded by H. P. Baldwin, who was appointed Nov. 17. The term expired 1881; *Mich. Alm.*, 1880, p. 57.

would show the Democratic and Greenback parties moving forward until a coalition in 1882 defeated the Republican State ticket for the first time in the history of that party.¹ David H. Jerome was defeated for re-election to the Governorship, and Josiah W. Begole, nominated by the alliance, won. Neither Ferry nor Byron G. Stout received a majority of the votes of the legislature the following spring for Senator, and Thomas W. Palmer was elected on the first of March to succeed Mr. Ferry.

¹ *Michigan as a State*, vol. iv, pp. 151 *et seq.* Hemans, *History of Michigan*, pp. 233-4.

CHAPTER IX

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PROGRESS OF MICHIGAN

CHARACTER OF THE POPULATION OF MICHIGAN

THE political history of Michigan has been intimately connected with the social condition and industrial activities of the people, and these were greatly influenced by two factors which contributed largely to the motives for political action. In the first place, the character and diversity of the population, which included a large percentage of natives of other states and foreign immigrants, were important elements in determining party preferences. In the second place, the geographical and geological conditions of the state insured diverse industrial interests which demanded different policies with reference to commerce and the tariff.

The adult population of the state at the period covered by this monograph consisted largely of emigrants from the New England States and from New York. In 1870 the state of New York was more extensively represented in the population of Michigan than the other eastern states, and Vermont, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Maine and New Hampshire ranked next in the order named.¹ Nearly all

¹ New York State	231,509
Vermont	14,445
Mass.	10,839
Conn.	7,412
Maine	3,932

Mich. Statistics, 1870, pp. xlv, xlv.

the men who gained prominence in Michigan politics were natives of the eastern states who migrated westward and as a rule took up first agriculture or some trade, then legal study and practice, and finally politics.¹ A large number received academic training while yet in the east, and brought with them a well-developed enthusiasm for higher learning and literary achievement.

The foreign-born population of the state in 1870 included 22.63 per cent of the total, and a decade later, the state ranked seventh in this respect.² Michigan had a larger Canadian element than any other state in the Union, and this class comprised one-third of the foreign element. The lumbering interests were a great encouragement, and the proximity of the Canadian provinces facilitated migration. Of the European countries, Great Britain and Ireland contributed the largest number. During the two decades from 1830-50, many Irish arrived and by 1870 there were over 42,000 in the state. The Germans ranked second, and a large immigration of Prussians set in from 1840 to 1850, but this, like the entire movement, received a sharp check by the crisis of 1873. It was also at this time that there occurred the great influx of Dutch, who settled principally in Ottawa County, about a center called Holland City, and by 1884, Michigan contained a greater Dutch population than any other state of the Union. At the time when this study ends Michigan ranked seventh

¹ David H. Jerome, Governor 1880-2, was the only Michigan born incumbent of that office within the period of this study, and Thomas W. Ferry the only Senator, 1871-1883.

² British America 89,590, Great Britain and Ireland 86,200, Germany 64,142 (Prussia 28,660), Holland 12,559, France 3,121.

In 1860 the foreign-born numbered 149,093, the native 600,020. In 1870 the former increased to 268,010, the latter to 916,049, showing that the foreign population had increased approximately 80%, and the native-born 50%. *Mich. Stat.*, 1870, pp. xliii, vi, vii, lviii-lxi; *Mich. Alm.*, 1873, pp. 36, 37; *Census of Mich.*, 1884, pp. xxx-xxxiii.

in the number of German inhabitants. They were always a carefully considered element in the contentions between the two regular parties, and with the increased prominence of the prohibition issue, the rivalry became more active. As a rule the Democracy had the larger vote among the Germans and the same was probably true of the other foreign nationalities.

The negro population was never an important element in Michigan either socially or politically. Numerically it was too insignificant to influence public opinion on the suffrage question or, upon its enfranchisement, to give any effectual aid to the Republican party. In 1870 it comprised only one per cent of the entire population, and in Cass County it reached its highest level of eight per cent.¹ Another element within the state which may be considered practically negligible in the politics of this period were the Aborigines. In 1870 there were only 4,926 Indians in Michigan, located in the northern portion of the state, and of these a large number had crossed the border from Canada.²

The increase in the population of the state was phenomenal during the period of this study. In the twenty years beginning with 1860 it much more than doubled. From the rank of sixteenth in the Union, Michigan rose to the ninth place, and the average annual rate of increase for the first decade mentioned was nearly 4.69 per cent. The financial crisis of 1873 naturally caused a temporary fall and from 1870 to 1874 it was 3.02 per cent.³ There was an

¹ This matter has been treated more fully in the chapters relating to the suffrage issues as presented in 1868 and 1870. Cf. *supra*, ch. iii, p. 80; ch. iv, p. 122.

² *Mich. Stat.*, 1870, p. xlv.

³ The population in 1860 was 749,113, in 1870, 1,184,282, 1874, 1,334,031, and in 1880, 1,636,937. *Mich. Stat.*, 1870, pp. lv-lvii; *Comp. of Mich. Stat.*, 1876 pp. 14, 15, 16. *Census of Mich.*, 1874; *Mich. Man.*, 1879, pp. 181-3.

obvious movement of settlement toward the northern and northwestern portions of the state during these years, and though the southern counties gained, it was in smaller ratio than the other parts of the state. In the decade preceding 1870, the Upper Peninsula increased in population fifty per cent, the central and southern portions of the state increased two hundred per cent, and the uppermost counties of the lower Peninsula showed a population almost five times as great as that at the beginning of the decade.¹ The next ten years did not show so rapid an increase. The Northern Peninsula doubled its numbers, while the population of the Central and Southern portions did not gain so rapidly. From a decennial rate of almost 58 per cent increase during the first decade, the state as a whole fell to 38.2 per cent, and of this the Northern portion claimed the largest proportional gain.² With this increase in the population of the northern portions of the state and because of the growth in the industries of those regions the protective tariff was to receive added support and the transportation facilities by rail and by water were to be built up and improved.

In respect to literacy and education, a frontier state like Michigan, possessing a large percentage of foreign-born population, would naturally be expected to rank rather low. The large previous immigrations from the eastern states,

¹ *Mich. Stat.*, 1870, pp. lv-lvii. The rank of the counties as given in the pages cited is not of great value in this connection, since those newly organized withdrew a large population from the more densely settled ones, and the variations in their relative rank are not always indicative of the local changes in population.

² *Mich. Man.*, 1879, pp. 181-183; *Census of Mich.*, 1884, pp. xxx-xxxiii, clxxxiv-v. The density of population was 13 per square mile in 1860, 20.6 in 1870, and 28.5 in 1880. The distinctly frontier nature of the state is thus evident in its rank as twenty-first in the Union in this respect.

however, held up the intellectual standard, when the great extractive industries of the north, and the frontier location of the state naturally tended to lower it. In 1870 the total number of persons of ten years and over who were unable to read did not exceed 3.5 per cent of the entire population of the state. Those who could not write slightly exceeded 5.6 per cent, and of these 57.56 per cent were of foreign birth.¹ In respect to the number of its publications Michigan ranked eighth.² Within the decade beginning with 1870, the number of newspapers and periodicals more than doubled, the weeklies outnumbering the dailies. In 1860 there were only 118 publications of all classes, including eight dailies. Within the two decades from 1860 to 1880, the journals trebled in number and of these many were devoted to non-political subjects.³

There were over 5,400 public schools of all grades within the state in 1870, with an attendance of almost 250,000 pupils. The private institutions of learning numbered over 150, and these included Day, Boarding, Parochial, Charity and Indian schools. Twenty-three higher institutions, twelve of which were termed "Classical", had an attendance of almost 3,400 students, and were maintained by endowment, public funds and tuition. It was not strange that all but one of these institutions were to be found in the five lower rows of counties, and these also had by far the best educational advantages so far as private schools were concerned. At this time the state possessed

¹ *Comp. of Mich. Stat.*, 1876, p. 16. Among the native-born in the latter case were 1823 Indians.

² In 1870 it had 215 newspapers and periodicals, in 1880, 464. The dailies had increased from 16 to 33, and the weeklies, 176 to 397. Fifteen of the publications were printed in German, and several in Dutch; twenty-six were non-political.

³ *Mich. Stat.*, 1870, pp. 666-677; *Census of Mich.*, 1884, p. xxxiv.

over 26,000 libraries of all classes with nearly 2,200,000 volumes. Of these the largest was the State Library at Lansing.¹

The educational topic which was the subject for the keenest political discussion was the state maintenance of the Agricultural College as a separate institution. Some urged its removal to Ann Arbor and its incorporation as a part of the State University, while others opposed it as a purely class institution. It was, however, maintained as founded—a state institution for special instruction.²

INDUSTRIES OF MICHIGAN

Of the industries carried on in Michigan agriculture was first in importance. The southern and south central portions of the state were most typically agricultural and small farms from twenty to fifty acres in extent were most general. About half of the land was improved and by 1884 the state ranked seventh in the gross value of its farms and farm machinery, and eighth in the value of its farm products.³ It was the southern and south-central portions which showed the most even balance of party preference and the strongest Democratic sympathies. It was also in these districts that the Granger and Greenback movements found the strongest support and influenced the leading parties to the greatest degree.

Next to agriculture the lumbering interests were of greatest importance in Michigan, and the state ranked first in respect to the value of the product. In 1870 the chief timber wealth was to be found in a territory between two

¹ *Mich. Stat.*, 1870, pp. 650-661, 663-665.

² *Cf. supra*, ch. iii, p. 76, for the discussion in the Constitutional Convention of 1867.

³ *Mich. Stat.*, 1870, pp. 274-277; *Comp. of Mich. Stat.*, for 1876, p. 27; *Census of Mich.*, 1884, pp. xxxi-ii.

lines, of which the northern one connected Alpena and Grand Traverse Bay, the southern one extended from Port Huron to Grand Haven. Here grew forests of pine, oak, hemlock and ash, the first immensely exceeding the others in abundance. North of this belt, and extending to the Straits of Mackinac there were forests of maple, beech, ash, oak and elm with extensive areas of pine. Here also grew some of the most valuable ornamental woods indigenous to the continent. The Upper Peninsula was far less noted for its timber than its minerals, but abounded in nearly all the variety of trees that were found farther south.

This timber was worked up mainly in the districts on the Great Lakes and along the large rivers, both east and west. In the Saginaw Valley, especially in Saginaw and Bay Counties, there were many mills located along the Saginaw River from which the products were shipped in great quantities. Other milling districts on the east shore were Tuscola, Huron, Sanilac and St. Clair Counties and Detroit. On the west, the chief centers were Grand Rapids, Grand Haven, Ludington, Manistee and Muskegon. In 1873 there were 1,600 saw-mills, the value of whose products very nearly approximated \$40,000,000, and much of this output was shipped to Quebec and Buffalo. In 1884 the annual value of the product was more than one-fifth of that of the entire Union.

The work in the forests of the north drew a large number of foreigners, Canada supplying by far the greatest number, and Germany and Ireland ranking next. In 1870 nearly one-half of the lumbermen, raftsmen and wood-choppers were foreigners.¹ Their alliance with the Demo-

¹ *U. S. Census*, 1870, vol. i, p. 740; *Mich. Stat.*, 1870, pp. xlviii-li; *Comp. of Mich. Stat.*, 1876, pp. 40-45; *Census of Mich.*, 1884, pp. xxxii-iv.

cratic party accounts in part for the strong Democratic tendencies of the northernmost counties of the Lower Peninsula. The north-central portions, especially of the west, were consistently Republican, however, and the manufacturing interests tended to promote the tariff policy in the state.¹

The immense mineral resources of the Upper Peninsula put Michigan in the first place with respect to the value of copper mined and the amount and value of the iron ore.² The work in the mines was chiefly carried on by foreigners, and out of 3,426 miners in 1870, only 233 were natives of the United States. The English and Welsh formed almost one-half of the foreign miners, while the Irish, German, Swedes, Norwegians and Danes followed in smaller numbers.³

The same observation may be made with reference to the political importance of the foreign element engaged in the mines of the Northern Peninsula as that with reference to the foreign class in the lumbering districts of the state. The Upper Peninsula was generally found to have strong Democratic sympathies, and the counties were often almost evenly divided. However, this region was so remote, and the means of transportation at this period were so imperfect in the north, that the election returns were often too

¹ Senator Thomas W. Ferry of Grand Haven was the chief representative of these interests in Michigan, and his attitude on the tariff question is obvious from his speeches in 1870 and 1872, *e. g.*, the speech on the "Folly of Reciprocity," May 24, 1870, *Globe*, Appx., pp. 370 *et seq.*

² Copper was mined in Houghton, Keweenaw and Ontonagon Counties, iron in Marquette, with smelting furnaces in that and adjoining counties. In the production of salt Michigan also ranked first, and the location of this industry was the district comprising Bay, Huron, Macomb, and Saginaw Counties. Coal, oil and gypsum were minor products. *Mich. Stat.*, 1870, pp. 550-569; *Comp. of Mich. Stat.*, 1876, pp. 4873; *Census of Mich.*, 1884, pp. xxxii-vi.

³ *Mich. Stat.* 1870, p. li.

late to be counted in the official canvass. There was naturally a greater indifference in this region to political issues than in any other with the exception of issues involving railroad construction and improvement in the facilities for commerce.

By far the greatest items of manufacture in the state were lumber and minerals, and these branches of the industry were most often carried on in districts convenient to the source of raw material. The manufacture of finished products was not so extensive as might be expected. There were, however, vehicle and furniture factories of considerable importance, especially in Grand Rapids, agricultural implement works and woolen and cotton factories. Inclusive of all classes of manufacture, the value of the entire product for 1870 was nearly \$123,000,000.¹ It is not improbable that the districts which contained most of these interests—the central and southern portions of the state—would be influenced by them to favor protective tariff and oppose free trade. The ship-building industry of Michigan was comparatively unimportant during the early part of the period, and in 1870 less than 600 persons were thus occupied. There were twelve ship-building yards, and the value of the vessels exceeded \$1,200,000.²

THE PUBLIC LANDS OF MICHIGAN

The public land question was an important issue throughout this period in Michigan political history, and mention has been made of the repeated declarations of the different parties in favor of more rigorous terms of land grants by the state to corporations, especially railroad companies.³

¹ *Comp. of Mich. Stat.*, 1876, pp. 81-87.

² *Ibid.*, p. 87; *Census of Mich.*, 1884, p. xxxvi; *Mich. Stat.*, 1870, p. li.

³ *Cf. supra*, ch. iii, p. 94; ch. v, p. 1; ch. viii, pp. 224, 226.

The problem in Michigan was very similar to that in the other states of the Northwest. As part of the territory ceded to the National Government from 1781 to 1786 by the states of New York, Virginia, Massachusetts and Connecticut, Michigan was one of the so-called "Public Land States" of the Union. Congress was the sole owner of the soil, with complete jurisdiction over the same.¹ It thus had the power under the Constitution² to dispose of this public domain under any conditions or by any method it saw fit, and all laws relating to this subject fall under two general heads. First are those providing directly for permanent private settlement and ownership, and second are those which make grants to states—or reserve tracts in territories—from the sale of which various interests, especially railroad companies, are to receive financial aid.

The earliest provision for the disposition of the public domain of the Northwest Territory was the Act of May 18, 1796—the first land ordinance of the Congress under the Constitution.³ The land was to pass to the highest bidder, the minimum price being fixed at \$2.00 per acre, and the purchaser was required to deposit but five per cent of the price at the time of sale. Various laws were passed which modified the Act of 1796, but the credit feature remained until April 24, 1820.⁴ From the opening of the land offices in the Northwest in 1810 to 1820, the sales in Michigan under the credit system amounted to 67,362.02 acres, yielding \$47,689,563.09.⁵ Through the failure of the purchasers to meet the terms of sale, some of this land reverted to the national government.

¹ Donaldson, *Public Domain*, pp. 10, 13. *United States vs. Railroad Bridge Co.*, 6 McLean, 517.

² Art. IV, §3, p. 2.

³ *Laws of U. S.*, ii, 533.

⁴ *Stat. at Large*, iii, 566.

⁵ Donaldson, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

From 1820 to 1840, various temporary relief measures were passed by Congress to relieve the financial distress of settlers who were not able to complete the terms of sale.¹ From September 4, 1841, dates the permanent pre-emption system of disposition of public lands, which, by the end of the period of this study, entitled persons of twenty-one years of age, or heads of families, to secure land to a maximum extent of 160 acres through the essential conditions of actual residence, improvement, and the payment of the price varying from \$1.25 to \$2.50 per acre.² Very nearly related to pre-emption was the homestead policy which, after several attempts and long discussion, was finally entered upon May 20, 1862.³ The act was several times amended, but the essential features of the policy are these—the gift of land in tracts of 160 acres or legal subdivisions, free of charge, to any citizen who is twenty-one years of age or the head of a family, and resides upon the land for five years. A nominal sum was chargeable merely sufficient to cover the costs of the surveys. Title could be secured prior to the five years regularly required, by the payment of the minimum price of the land as provided in the pre-emption acts. This was known as “commutation of homestead entries”. In the same manner, a pre-emptor was allowed to change his holding to a homestead entry by residing upon the land the required length of time, and the land became taxable, by state law, at the close of the residence period of five years.⁴

In Michigan, during the year 1863, there were 1,537 en-

¹ Donaldson, *op. cit.*, p. 205 *et seq.*

² *Ibid.*, pp. 214-16; *Stat. at Large*, vol. v, p. 453.

³ Donaldson, *op. cit.*, pp. 349-50; *Revised Statutes*, pp. 419-24.

⁴ *Acts of Mich.*, 1873, no. 169, pp. 227-8.

tries calling for 195,939.66 acres. The number of entries was reduced to half in 1865, rose again the succeeding year and maintained an annual average of 1,500 until 1877, when it fell to 947.¹ The aggregate number of entries in the state from 1863 to 1880 was 25,086, with a total of 2,911,749.13 acres. It will thus be seen that within the two decades of this study, almost 10 per cent of the area of the state, which constituted a little over 36 millions of acres, was entered for homesteads. This manner of dealing with the public domain was much encouraged by the state, and frequent declarations appear in the party platforms demanding the preference of home-seekers over corporations.

The second method of disposition of the public domain not included within territories is that of grants to states for the financial aid of various interests. Among the earliest grants made to Michigan were those of June 23, 1856,² for educational purposes. In the first place the sixteenth section of every township was granted for the common schools of the state, and this approximated one-thirty-sixth of the entire area of Michigan, or almost 1,067,400 acres. In Ohio, Indiana and Illinois it was the customary practice to give over the management of these sections to the respective townships in which they lay, but Michigan wisely reserved the control in the hands of the state government. In the second place, Michigan and Arkansas each received two townships for university purposes. The State Commission appointed to make the selection for

¹ Donaldson, *op. cit.*, pp. 350-355. S. Sato, "History of the Land question in the United States," *Johns Hopkins University Studies in Hist. and Pol. Science*, 1886, Fourth Series, Pamphlets 7, 8, 9, p. 176 *et seq.*

² Donaldson, *op. cit.*, p. 228; *Mich. Coll.*, vol. vii, pp. 17-35. "History of Land Grants for Education in Michigan," George W. Knight, pp. 23-28.

Michigan chose a tract which lay along the Maumee River. It was then included within the limits of the state, and is now the heart of the city of Toledo, Ohio. These lands were early sold far below their real value, as 400 acres were disposed of for \$5,000, and the remainder of the 46,080 acres passed for little more than \$19 per acre.¹

In order to complete the brief account of educational grants in Michigan the Morrill Act of July 2, 1862² should be mentioned at this point. By this measure each state was to receive 30,000 acres for each of its members in Congress in 1860, though a maximum was placed at one million acres for one state, and the old states were required to accept within three years.³ The moneys derived from the sale of these lands were to create a fund, the interest of which was to be used for "at least one college" in each state, the leading object of which was "to promote the liberal and practical education of the industrial classes in their several pursuits in life." As Michigan was then represented in the lower house of Congress by six members, the state received 240,000 acres of land, and from this land she realized somewhat over \$275,000.

The proceeds of the sale of these "educational lands" of various classes were not all devoted to the purposes for which they were originally intended. An act of March 10, 1875, provided that "all money received into the State Treasury for the sale of lands and placed to the credit of the University, Agricultural College, Normal or Primary School fund, after March 1, 1875 shall be used in defraying the expenses of the state government."⁴

¹ Knight, *op. cit.*, pp. 29-34.

² *U. S. Stat. at Large*, xii, p. 5035.

³ Michigan accepted July 25, 1863, *Acts*, 1863, p. 54.

⁴ *Acts*, 1875, no. 22, p. 21.

The second great class of federal land grants were those for internal improvements, and among these, the railroad lands were probably of the greatest ultimate importance.¹ Canals and wagon roads were of earlier construction. In Michigan there were large tracts of swamp lands alleged to be worthless in their natural condition and impossible of reclamation by direct national interposition. Their improvement was extremely desirable, however, from the point of view of sanitation and also of the enhancement in value of the adjoining government property. Accordingly, in 1850, Congress granted Michigan, among other states, the wet lands within her limits for reclamation.² In this state, as well as Wisconsin and Minnesota, the selection was made not by state agents, as it was customary to provide in some of the other states, but by federal officers—either the Surveyor-General or the Commissioner of the General Land Office. This grant of 7,373,804.72 acres constituted the largest single gift made to the state at any one time, and it was expected that the sale of part of these "swamp and overflowed lands" would pay the expenses of reclaiming the rest, which could be used for the development of transportation facilities.

In addition to these Congress made special grants from time to time for the construction of canals, wagon-roads and railroads. The total amount of land granted by Congress for the construction of canals from 1852 to the close of the period of this study was 1,250,000 acres. For the construction of the St. Mary's Falls Ship Canal, alone, 750,000 acres of mineral and farming lands were donated.

¹ *Mich. Coll.*, vol. vii, pp. 52-68. "Federal Land grants for Internal Improvements in the state of Michigan," by A. N. Bliss, A. M.

² Donaldson, *op. cit.*, pp. 219-20; Bliss, *op. cit.*, p. 53 *et seq.* The state legislature passed an act in 1861 to secure the settlement and drainage of the swamp land. *Acts*, 1861, p. 145.

They were located in the region of the "Mineral Range" in the Upper Peninsula, and included the site of the famous Calumet and Hecla Copper Mines.¹ The canal was completed in 1855, but the needs of commerce later required its deepening and enlargement. Accordingly, Congress donated 250,000 acres to the state and this was in turn appropriated. In 1881 the canal was completed, and five years later the construction of the present locks² was begun.

Water transportation was also promoted by deepening the channel between Lakes St. Clair and Huron. On account of the vast natural resources of the state, the entire district about the lakes demanded improved facilities for transportation by water. All large vessels were compelled to sail by a long and tortuous route through Walpole Creek between Harson's and Walpole Islands, or by way of Bear River around Ann's Island, for the main channel of the St. Clair River south of Algonac was very shallow. Finally, in 1856, General Cass secured an appropriation of \$65,000. With this amount a channel was cleared six thousand feet long, one hundred-fifty feet wide, and nine feet deep. After several unsuccessful attempts on the part of Chandler an additional appropriation was secured in 1866, with which the channel was deepened to sixteen feet.³ The lands granted for the building of wagon roads exceeded 221,000 acres by June 20, 1864, after which date the practice ceased.⁴

¹ Donaldson, *op. cit.*, p. 258; Bliss, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-65. The land for the canal was donated by Congress, Aug. 26, 1852, and accepted by Michigan, Feb. 5, 1853.

² *Acts*, 1871, no. 88, p. 117; R. D. Williams, *Life of Peter White*, pp. 210-11.

³ *Mich. Coll.*, vol. 21, pp. 352-367; xxii, p. 496.

⁴ Donaldson, *op. cit.*, p. 260; Bliss, *op. cit.*, pp. 52-57.

Railroads were, however, the state issue of greatest economic importance during this period. After 1864 there was rapid progress in their construction, due mainly to the demand for additional outlets for the natural products of the state, especially lumber, salt and plaster. The trunk lines at this time entered into competition in the projection of lateral and connecting lines, and a strong feeling in favor of extending local aid to these enterprises existed prior to 1849. The adverse decision in the Salem case¹ in 1870 temporarily checked construction, but the rapid progress made during the succeeding three years demonstrated the absence of any necessity for municipal aid.²

The growth of the railroad systems in Michigan had been phenomenal. In 1860 there were less than 800 miles of railroad in operation in the state; ten years later there were over 1,700 miles; and by 1876 there were 3,615 miles. The crisis of 1873 abruptly checked construction and the following year only 61 miles were added. However, there were in 1874 thirty-four corporations operating in the state, with about three-fifths of their mileage lying within its boundaries. For the period from 1865 to 1875 which marked the greatest activity in railroad building, the average annual construction was 330 miles, but the climax was reached in 1872 when 901 miles were added. The greatest mileage in 1876 was operated by the Lake Shore and Michigan Southern with its branches, the Grand Rapids and Indiana ranked next, the Flint and Pere Marquette, the

¹ *Mich. Law Reports*, vol. xx, pp. 452-522.

² Municipal aid had been granted by Acts 1869, No. 45, pp. 89-95, which enabled any township to give aid to railroads, and No. 336, pp. 660-1, March 24, legalizing such action on the part of towns. For the importance of this question in politics, *cf. supra*, ch. iii, pp. 81; ch. iv, pp. 108 *et seq.*

Chicago and Michigan Lake Shore, and the Michigan Central followed in the order named.¹

The railroads, it has been said, were the chief recipients of federal aid. All attempts to secure land grants in their behalf failed until June 3, 1856, but from that date until the close of this period almost 3,356,000 acres were given the state for their benefit. The mileage of exclusively land grant railroads, however, did not exceed 1,005 by June 30, 1880.² The main beneficiaries during the period from 1856 to 1872 were the Jackson, Lansing and Saginaw Railway, which received almost 750,000 acres, the Grand Rapids and Indiana, almost 630,000 acres, the Chicago and North Western, 518,000 acres, and the Flint, Pere Marquette, 512,000 acres.

The state, as a rule, promptly accepted these lands for the corporations already in existence, for whom they were intended, or encouraged the creation of corporations to undertake the work anticipated by Congress. It passed precautionary measures designed to protect the wooded lands, and prevent the cutting and carrying away of lumber.³ There were cases when the state was called upon to declare the forfeiture of land by a railroad which failed to comply with the required conditions in the grant. Thus in 1869, the Marquette and Ontario Railroad Company lost its lands on the ground that it had failed to construct ten miles of road each year.⁴

From time to time Congress was called upon to extend

¹ The mileage was approximately 403, 280, 279, 246, 220 respectively; *Comp. of Mich. Stat.*, 1875, pp. 89-94; *Mich. Man.*, 1877, p. 298; *Mich. Alm.*, 1879, p. 47; 1880, p. 30.

² Donaldson, *op. cit.*, p. 268, 275, 287, and chart, p. 948; Bliss, *op. cit.*, pp. 65-68.

³ *Acts of Mich.*, 1867, no. 97, Mar. 25, 1867, and 1869, no. 34, p. 51.

⁴ *Acts*, 1869, p. 411.

the period for the construction of a land-grant railway. These repeated demands upon its time and attention finally ended in 1879, when the United States released to Michigan all interest in the lands granted to the state by the act of 1856.¹

THE FINANCES OF MICHIGAN

The financial condition of Michigan during this period gave the Republicans good grounds for congratulating themselves upon an economical administration. The bonded indebtedness of the state had reached very nearly \$4,000,000 by the close of 1866 and annual reductions brought the debt down to approximately \$2,385,000 in 1870. The crisis of 1873 caused the proceeds from the sale of lands to fall from over \$230,000 in 1873 to less than \$62,000 the next year.

The years of 1874 and 1875 were the most important politically with reference to the management of the state finances. The Constitution provided for a sinking fund to be applied solely to the payment and extinguishment of the principal of the state debt, with certain qualifications.² The specific taxes applicable to the purpose not only met the interest on the entire indebtedness, both bonded and trust, but afforded a surplus more than sufficient to pay the maturing principal of the bonded debt. The surplus from this source averaged about \$210,000 per annum during the early years of the decade. It was this constantly increasing surplus that the Democrats strongly objected to, alleging that it was loaned to favored banks, in which state officials were interested, at a lower rate of interest than was generally current, and with poor security. They urged in 1874 that due to this accumulation of state funds in

¹ *Stat. at Large*, vol. lxx, p. 490.

² Constitution, Art. XIV, Sections 1 and 2.

1874 the state taxes should not be assessed this year, but their demand was not complied with. This agitation was certainly an influence in bringing about legislation in the session of 1875 authorizing the purchase of unmatured bonds at such rates as the Governor, State Treasurer and Auditor General should see fit.¹ Under this act bonds to the amount of \$125,000 were purchased at a premium of a fraction over three per cent.

The Republicans could substantiate their boast that in the face of accumulation of the surplus, taxation had been reduced. From approximately \$590,000 in 1866 it had risen and fallen until in 1870 it was less than \$483,000. In 1872, however, it rose to over \$920,000, and in the year of the crisis the receipts fell short of the disbursements by over \$170,000. The specific taxes for the period from 1866 to 1875 were received mainly from railroads, insurance companies, mines and banks, and the total receipts of this nature were almost three times as great at the close of the decade as at the beginning. The entire appropriations to institutions charitable, reformatory, penal, and educational, increased from almost \$178,000 to \$427,000.²

It was not strange, then, that the dominant party should point with pride to the financial condition of the state, especially as it appeared before the panic, and that they should claim to have secured a surplus in the treasury notwithstanding the reduction of taxation. The charges brought against the financing of the surplus, and the censure naturally attached by the Democrats in 1873 to the railroad policy of the Republicans both aided to give the

¹ *Acts*, 1875, p. 294.

² *Mich. Alm.*, 1870, pp. 62, 63; *Mich. Man.*, 1873, pp. 336, 348, 350, 351; 1875, pp. 314-319; 1877, pp. 352, 356, 357; 1879, p. 306; *Comp. of Mich. Stat.*, 1876, pp. 16-20; *Census of Mich.*, 1884, pp. xxxii-iii; *Report of Auditor General*, 1874, p. 385; 1875, p. 8.

combined opposition great gains in the fall election of 1874. The suspicion aroused by the accumulation of over \$1,000,000, with no intention of exempting the state from taxation for one year, obviously helped turn the tide in state politics against the dominant party.

Such were the social, industrial and economic conditions of the state which were most prominent in the politics of the period. The diversity of interests led to a diversity of issues, and the rapid industrial development of this naturally rich frontier state brought into the foreground questions of internal improvement and railroad extension. The size of the state directly tended to foster sectionalism, and this was a potent factor in the personal politics of the period. The defeat of Jacob M. Howard for the Senatorship, the succession of Thomas W. Ferry, and the policies of Austin Blair and William A. Howard are all evidences of the extent to which this factor influenced the politics of the time.

CONCLUSION

At the close of this study it may be remarked in summary that the politics of the state were at first dominated by national issues, while the local interests which centered about the extension of railroads and the development of industry were decidedly of secondary importance. With the close of the war these state matters assumed greater importance, and repeated attempts were made to revise or amend the constitution with reference to railroad aid, internal improvement and the increase of salaries. The negro suffrage issue, which was purely national at first, became a subject for state action in 1868, and in 1870 on the second trial the change was adopted by a vote which obviously crossed party lines. The development of railroads was at first a non-political matter which was but a part of the general tendency of the period. After the decision in the Salem case had popularized the conception of the nature of taxation, the parties took sides and the Republicans were reasonably considered the friends of railway aid. By 1871, however, the opposition was so strong that they were glad to abandon their extreme projects and progress with greater conservatism.

The well-nigh unassailable position of the Republican party in Michigan rendered the Democracy virtually powerless save when a union could be effected with some disaffected faction. The unusually violent and aggressive nature of the powerful leader, Zachariah Chandler, occasioned strong opposition which several times threatened to cause a schism in the party. The disaffected joined with

the Democracy in 1870, giving it one member in Congress. The rise of a combined opposition was interrupted by the catastrophe of 1872, but two years later resulted in a surprising defeat of the dominant party. This opposition receded again in 1876 and 1878, then took on new vigor and reached its climax six years later in the election of the state ticket by the combined forces of the Democracy and Greenback party. The latter had not become directly influential until 1878.

The currency issue more than any other endangered the unity of the two regular parties. At different times it came near to disrupting both parties, and out of political expediency both were forced into some inconsistencies. The Republicans suffered from serious disaffection in their ranks in 1874, but after their punishment at the polls, the factions again became entirely harmonious. It was the Democracy which in 1878 was seriously divided between suspension and resumption, and its willingness to combine with the National Greenback party four years later broke the continuous line of state Republican victories. Late in the seventies the new party threatened to disrupt both of the old organizations along the lines of soft money and suspension, but that danger was averted, with the result that alliance rather than disruption reversed the political status in Michigan.

The Reform element within the state consisted not only of the powerless minority party but of disaffected factions within the leading party. This movement was temporarily successful within the state in 1870 and again four years later, but the personal politics centering about Austin Blair made the contest unusually bitter. It was an unfortunate instance of the powerful conservatives chastising a small group of reformers, the leader of whom had been a great factor in giving the party its high standard in the state.

The war-governorship of Austin Blair was, by its attendant circumstances, one of the most powerful forces which gave the Republicans their ultra-loyal appearance during the war and their strong position in succeeding years. The ex-governor is conceded to have been a man of far too great conscience and conviction to have made a successful political career for himself amid the conflicting ambitions of the entire group of leaders. Furthermore, it is not unreasonable to suppose that his successive defeats for the much-desired senatorship made him extremely sensitive to the factious troubles within his party. Whatever may have been the dominant reason for these movements, his was certainly an unusual record. As an extreme anti-slavery Whig he joined the Free Soil party and later became one of the ultra-Radical leaders among the Republicans. In 1872 he was the foremost Michigan man in the Reform movement and the candidate for Governor of the combined opposition. He became so completely alienated from his former alliance that four years later he was named for Presidential elector by the Democracy of the state. It is not improbable that the sharp criticism he suffered at the hands of his former friends drove Austin Blair further than he would otherwise have gone.

Prohibition was a persistent movement which encountered a reaction in the form of the License party, and the temperance question was throughout a troublesome one for both parties. It was well understood that the large German vote would be at the opposite end of the balance and the two parties were cautious about favor to the Prohibitionists.

The Grangers in Michigan did not nominate a state ticket, but they exercised a potent influence over the Democracy in 1874, especially in its nominations. The subordinate organizations built upon the minor issues that ap-

peared locally and depended upon temporary conditions could not prevail to any considerable extent against the regular party formation.

In the general view of the period of this study, the Republican party of Michigan appears virtually invulnerable. It had advantages historically, and the party organization was as nearly perfect as strong-minded and absolute leaders could make it with the aid of a most effectual assessment system. Thus Michigan was, at this period, what the foremost leader often called this state, the "Massachusetts of the West".

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The "Jenison Collection" in the Michigan State Library at Lansing contains volumes of political pamphlets with speeches in Congress and campaign addresses delivered throughout the state.

The Howard Manuscripts, Volumes 89 to 95, in the library of Mr. C. M. Burton, Detroit, contain many valuable personal communications of Jacob M. Howard relative to the politics of the time. Though by far the greatest part of his correspondence relates to his legal practice and is bound with the Joy and Emmons papers, the several

volumes above cited contain many letters of very deep interest. They are the only accessible manuscript source of any importance for this study.

V. OFFICIAL STATE PUBLICATIONS.

Acts of the Legislature, passed in the Biennial Sessions meeting the odd years, and the Extra Sessions; Senate and House Journals; Senate, House and Joint Documents; Journal of the Constitutional Convention of 1867, and Debates of the Convention, 2 volumes; Annual Report of the Auditor General; State Census Reports for 1864 and the decennial years following; Compilation of Michigan Statistics, 1876, compiled under authority of the Governor in the interest of Emigration, S. B. McCracken; Michigan Manual, a convenient compilation of extensive data for the use of members of the legislature. It is published every odd year and contains various election statistics with valuable comparative tables.

VI. NEWSPAPER COMPILATIONS.

The Michigan Almanac, published by the *Detroit Tribune*, is the best source for a study of the political statistics of Michigan; *The Legislative Souvenir and Political History of Michigan*, 1897, published by the *Lansing State Republican*, contains useful material relating to the period in question.

VII. NEWSPAPERS.

By far the most important sources for the political history of this period are the journals of the state. The number of newspapers available has unfortunately been limited by a frequent neglect on the part of offices and libraries to preserve contemporary files. In many of the offices throughout the state, however, are found files of papers now continued or absorbed, but the larger libraries are, of course, the most valuable repositories of old numbers. The most important of these are the State Library at Lansing, the Detroit, Battle Creek, Bay City, Grand Rapids, Hillsdale, Jackson, Kalamazoo and Niles Public Libraries, and the Libraries of the State University at Ann Arbor and the College of Mines at Houghton. The Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., has a very good collection of files of the leading party organs of Michigan during this period. They include the *Detroit Post*, *Advertiser and Tribune*, *Free Press*, *Evening News*, *Lansing State Republican*, *Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, *Jackson Daily Citizen*, *Benton Harbor Palladium*.

The Republican journals which have been available for this period, 1864-1878, either entire or in part are as follows, in the order of relative importance: *Detroit Post*; *Detroit Advertiser and Tribune*; *Lansing*

State Republican; Grand Rapids Daily Eagle; Jackson Citizen; Kalamazoo Telegraph; Niles Republican, Hillsdale Daily Standard; Benton Harbor Palladium; Grand Traverse Herald; Pontiac Gazette; Saginaw Valley News; Bay City Daily Tribune; Coldwater Republican; Wolverine Citizen, Flint; Mason News; St. Clair Republican; Ypsilanti Commercial; Allegan Journal; Aarian Times; Charlotte Republican.

The journals which were considered "independent" are as follows: *Detroit Evening News, Marshall Statesman, Portage Lake Mining Gazette; Grand Rapids Times; Benton Harbor Times; Saginaw Courier; Michigan Tribune, Battle Creek.* With the exception of the first two papers, there are very few numbers of these independent journals accessible.

Those which supported the Greenback movement are: *Adrian Press; Allegan Democrat; Battle Creek Journal; Grand Rapids Democrat; Niles Weekly Mirror.*

The Democratic organs which were consulted are as follows: *Detroit Free Press; Michigan Argus, Ann Arbor; Jackson Patriot; Kalamazoo Gazette; Niles Democrat; Lansing Journal; Marshall Expounder; Muskegon News; National Democrat, Cassopolis; Bay City Observer; Monroe Monitor; Traverse Bay Eagle; and the unreconciled copperhead sheet, Ypsilanti Sentinel.*

This list of consulted journals includes all that are available, so far as exhaustive and insistent correspondence was able to prove, and of the papers cited last in each list there were discovered in some cases only a few numbers unbound and unarranged, in offices, court house collections and public and private libraries.

It will be observed that almost none of the newspapers mentioned were from the northern part of the state. There were, of course, relatively fewer published in that portion, and less fortunate facilities existed for their preservation. In the state as a whole, there are over one hundred newspapers unavailable for this period, as there were 163 political organs in 1870 and only 49 can be accounted for, including many with only a few scattered numbers.

The Republican Party is most completely represented in the journals still remaining, for the obvious reason that it naturally supported the greatest number of publications in Michigan.

For election returns, most if not all of the above-named organs have been cited, as it was thought they indicated local sentiment and political preferences. For really valuable editorial comment, however, the four large Detroit journals, the *Lansing State Republican, Grand Rapids Daily Eagle*, and the *Ann Arbor Argus* are by far the most reliable.

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